THE BIBLE

REASON WHY

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THE

BIBLICAL

REASON WHY:

A

Family Guide to Scripture Readings,

AND A

HAND-BOOK FOR BIBLICAL STUDENTS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE REASON WHY---GENERAL SCIENCE," "THE REASON WHY---NATURAL HISTORY," "THAT'S IT, OR PLAIN TEACHING," ETC.

Robert Kemp Philp.

ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS.

This Work gives REASONS founded upon the Bible, and assigned by the most eminent Divines and Christian Philosophers, for the great and all-absorbing events recorded in the History of the Bible, the Life of our Saviour, and the Acts of His Apostles.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE study of the Bible has ever been, and will always continue, a deeply interesting one to every earnest and faithful Christian; because it contains the seeds of that knowledge of salvation so essential to his soul's welfare. Many clever and learned commentaries have been written on the Holy Scriptures, displaying, on the part of their authors, deep and profound erudition; but as many, who are, perchance, well acquainted with its sacred truths in their own language, may not be sufficiently, if at all, versed in the Hebrew, Chaldaic, or Greek—the original languages in which both the Old and New Testaments were written—

these commentaries are to them sealed books, and many a passage is regarded as difficult and obscure for want of some plain and simple explanation of a particular custom or characteristic, that might at once clear away the cloud of darkness hanging over it.

Another class of persons there are who have not had many educational advantages, and are able, not without labour and difficulty, to read their Bible. They must often feel the want of some book that would help them in their Biblical study, and, at the same time, originate for them a new train of thought.

There is also the rising generation—that great hope of Christ's kingdom—of whom our Saviour said, "Suffer them to come unto me:" these are the constant objects of Christian solicitude; to them the Book of Life has to be opened, and its precious contents explained and applied.

No opinion has been adduced that does in any, or the slightest degree militate against the grand fundamental doctrines of our holy religion, as for instance, the Doctrine of Baptism, or of the Trinity; nor is there anything throughout the whole work that is not perfectly consonant with the tenets of our Christian churches.

That this work, though not pretending to rival in scholarship, or profound learning, its older and more able predecessors in Biblical lore, may yet be the means of helping many a sincere and right-minded Christian in the study of the Book of Life; and also may lead many a careless reader and hearer of its sacred truths to a more hearty longing for greater spiritual knowledge and growth in heavenly wisdom, is the most earnest wish and desire of

A Clergyman.

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

In introducing the "Biblical Reason Why" to the American reader, the Publishers conceive it judicious to put on record their honest reasons; to place themselves *rectus in curia*, as the legal gentlemen say, in the premises. They desire to assume higher ground than the exclusively business one of common mercenary impulses. They desire to have it understood that a leading motive in their enterprise was a disposition to *popularise a knowledge of the Scriptures;* to remove the embarrassments which usually beset the way of the unlearned multitude in the perusal of the Bible; to smooth the road to an easy and thorough comprehension of its more obscure passages; to enable the mass of the people to peruse that invaluable work understandingly, so as to arrive at correct conclusions for themselves, and enjoy with more eminent satisfaction the commentaries and deductions of the accredited ministers of the gospel.

In the United States, the inclination to read is universal. The ability to read, (thanks to that spirit of progress which animates the great body of our political institutions!) is almost co-extensive with this instinct. And few will deny that the most interesting and advantageous subject for the popular study and reflection, in this country, is the Volume whose teachings constitute the basis of all our laws; whose principles are confessedly recognized in all our apprehensions of justice; whose tenets pulsate, like the life-blood, in every vein and artery of our social system; whose code of morals sways, insensibly, all commerce between man and man, as well as dictates the accepted relationship between man and his Maker.

Apart from all considerations of a purely devotional character, the Bible is a production of that character of which no one who pretends to have an appetite for solid information, cares to feel himself ignorant. But, without an intimate acquaintance with ancient history, ancient habitudes, and ancient learning generally, it is beyond the power of the ordinary reader to impress upon his memory an ample knowledge

of Biblical facts; he is constantly sensible of his defective erudition, and he may have neither the means nor the leisure to seek out for himself those sources of relative enlightenment which can alone enable him to appreciate, in all respects, the allusions and expressions of the inspired writings. Heads of families are more particularly subjected to these mortifying self-convictions, when questioned by eager children in regard to the more occult suggestions of the Word of God. To all such, this "REASON WHY" must become an inestimable companion. It leaves them with no excuse for ignorance on Biblical subjects. It supplies them with a convenient instructor, always accessible, always prompt, always satisfactory.

To that large class of American citizens, who view the Scripture with a feeling more akin to reverence, and who search the inspired pages for that inner light, which is as their "cloud by day and their pillar of fire by night," to guide them in a conscientious direction —what a source of increased mental enjoyment the "REASON WHY" presents! Puzzling paragraphs become transparent as air! Vague and incoherent sentences assume, at once, the beautiful proportions of exactness! Apparent inconsistencies disappear; and what before seemed susceptible of duplicate interpretations, stands forth, by the aid of this explanatory coadjutor, in all the rare simplicity of self-manifest truth.

The Publishers deem it but justice to add, that the "BIBLICAL REASON WHY" will be found, on scrutiny, to be *wholly divested of all sectarian bias whatever*. It will be found exempt from every shadow of a disposition to offend the prejudices or partialities, the views or opinions of any class of readers. It *teaches no dogmas*. It inculcates no special topic of faith. It contents itself with a reference to authorities and facts, leaving the student, in every case, to use his own judgment and draw his own conclusions. This strict impartiality should commend it to every fastidious mind; and, as a vast repertory of valuable information, it must commend itself to every reflecting one.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

A BOOK purporting to furnish THE REASON WHY OF THE BIBLE should, of all books, be the most interesting, and, next to the volume that forms the subject of its query, the most important.

Who has not heard of the Bible? Who, in these days, and in these regions of the earth at least, has not read it? Who is unconcerned in the message it conveys? The Bible is the best known of books; as it is now (thanks to the press) the most readily obtainable. There is not, or need not be, a single homestead, whether within the sound of the "church-going bell," or removed to newer and less happy neighbourhoods, in which it does not obtain an honoured place.

But, it may also be asked, of its tens of thousands of readers, how many are in possession of those data upon which a reasonable and intelligent confidence in its history and authority are founded? And it must be painfully evident that to this question an extremely unsatisfactory answer can alone be given. Very much of what is learned at school is forgotten in after-life. This arises partly from the nature of the case, and partly from the fact that the knowledge communicated, from a variety of causes, has not been of a character to impress itself upon the memory.

But the Reason Why of the Bible should be a household phrase. Why we esteem the sacred volume above all others; why we cherish it as the *sine qua non* of the domestic library; why we resort to it in trouble, and hold to its revelations and promises, equally in sunshine and shadow, should be, of all our knowledge, the best grounded.

The present work professes to have collected, not only a large number of answers to as many important questions, but

to present in a brief and intelligible form the worthiest motives for the credibility of the sacred Scriptures. It does not aim at the position and character of a commentary, strictly so called. From a great number of bulky and learned books the Author has culled the most obvious and tangible "reasons." In some cases the passages quoted have been given literally; in others they have been abbreviated or paraphrased; in all cases they have been weighed calmly and impartially. Nor has a dogmatic tone been indulged. Where doctrines have been stated, the authorities for them have been named, and the reader has been left to accept them or not, accordingly as he estimates the weight of that authority.

The limits of the work prevented the insertion of other important collateral reasons for some of the facts and precepts in addition to those given. But it was thought that, with ordinary minds, one good reason for a thing was sufficient.

The relative space occupied by the Old and New Testaments will be seen to be rather unequal, and not proportionate to the two great divisions of the Bible. The reason for such an arrangement has been, that in the opinion of the Author the New Testament claimed the larger amount of attention, and presented greater features of interest. Besides which, the subject had been less frequently considered. With respect to the latter portion, scarcely a point of interest or detail has been passed over without notice, and perhaps a larger amount of minute information has never before been brought together in so convenient a form, or within so limited a space.

In illustration of this the reader is referred to the instance of the resuscitation of Lazarus (paragraphs 880-1, page 193). After the miracle-working words, "Lazarus come forth," had been uttered by our Saviour, the bystanders were directed to "loose" the restored man, and "let him go" (John xi. 44). In ninety-nine instances out of a hundred these words, fully appreciated by the friends of Lazarus, have awakened no very definite idea in the mind of Bible-readers. The Biblical Reason Why shows, by means of a small engraving and a short paragraph, the whole meaning and scope of such an order.

Again. How many readers of the Epistles of St. Paul,

when turning over that to the Galatians, have paused to consider who, and of what character were the Galatians? And with what a new interest will a American or British student peruse those inspired leaves, when he learns for the first time that these Asiatic Christians were probably some of his own ancestors—Gauls who, under Brennus, had migrated, unconsciously as it were, to within sound of the apostolic trumpet.

A list of authorities consulted and quoted will be found in the following page. It should be here stated that the list includes but a small proportion of the works consulted by the writer, who has, during many years, devoted much attention to Biblical subjects. The illustrations have been selected from the best sources, and, it is hoped, will materially assist the elucidation offered by the text.

For the purpose of ensuring the greatest possible accuracy, the MS. and the proof sheets were passed through the hands of a Biblical Scholar, whose testimony to the soundness, accuracy, and utility of the work will be found expressed in the Introduction which precedes these pages.

That the perusal of his book may be attended with as much pleasure to the reader as has resulted from its composition, is the Author's heartfelt wish.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES AND WORKS

CONSULTED AND QUOTED IN THE

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Bardon's Costumes des ancien Peuples.
Barnes, A., on the New Testament.
Beard's Historical Evidences.
Brown's, W., Antiquities of the Jews.
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Burden's Oriental Customs.
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Bush's Illustration of the Scriptures.
Butler's Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion.
Butler's Lives of the Saints.
Calmet's Commentaire.
Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible.
Carpenter's Natural History of the Scriptures, Litterale sur tous les livres de l'Ancien et du Noveau Testament.
Carr's Manual of Roman Antiquities.
Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary.
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☞ *The Numbers, except where otherwise indicated, refer to the Questions. The various titles of our Saviour, such as "our Lord," "Jesus," "Christ," etc., have been entered under the one appellation of "Jesus;" so that most of the Questions relating to our Saviour will be found in one part of the Index.*

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THE

BIBLICAL REASON WHY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ORIGIN AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BIBLE AND ITS VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS.

1. *Why is the Bible the most venerable as well as the most interesting of books?*

Because of its divinely-inspired authorship, and because it is a record of those dealings of God with His creatures which it concerns every human being to be well acquainted with. It is the revealed will of God, making known His love, law, and judgments.

2. *Why is the Bible so named?*

From *Biblia*, a Greek word signifying "the books," or "the small books;" or from *Biblos*, "the book," it being THE BOOK by way of pre-eminence; containing the revelations made from God to man, the principles of the Christian faith, and its rules of practice.

3. The word Bible occurs in the preface to Ecclesiasticus, and in 2 Timothy iv. 13, of the Septuagint version. Before the adoption of this name, the more usual terms in the Christian Church by which the sacred books were denominated were, "the Scripture," "the Scriptures," and "the Sacred Letters."

The Bible consists of two parts—the Old and the New Testaments. The former was written in Hebrew, with the exception of the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, which are in Chaldaic; the latter in Greek. The Old Testament was translated into Greek at Alexandria, and in the monarchy of Ptolemy Philadelphus (B.C. 277. This version was called the *Septuagint*.

Meaning of their Titles.

The whole Bible was rendered into the Saxon tongue about the year A.D. 940. Various later translations were made during the Tudor period. The authorized version was commenced in the reign of James I. (A.D. 1604).

4. *Why is the term* "HOLY SCRIPTURES" *applied to the Old and New Testaments?*

Because, as the word Bible signifies "the book," or "book of books," the word Scripture, or writing, in this instance implies that these are "the writings of all writings."

5. The word Scripture is applied in 2 Peter i. 20, in Matthew xxii. 29, Acts viii. 24, and the prefix Holy in 2 Timothy iii. 15, to all the sacred writings then collected. About A.D. 180, the term "Holy Scriptures" was used to include the Gospels. From the end of the 2nd and beginning of the 3rd century, at which time a collection of the New Testament writings was generally received, the term came into constant use, and was so applied as to include all the books contained in the version of the Septuagint, as well as those of the Hebrew canon.

6. *What is the meaning of the term "inspired," as applied to the sacred writings?*

It implies that the authors of the Biblical books were informed, either mediately or immediately, by the Spirit of God, of such matters as it was necessary they should write; or, in the apostolic words (2 Peter i. 21), "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

7. The definition of the word *inspiration* given by Dr. Knapp is as follows:— "It may be best defined, according to the representations of the Scriptures themselves, as an extraordinary Divine agency upon teachers while giving instruction, whether oral or written, by which they were taught what and how they should write and speak."

A strong proof that the Scriptures have been divinely inspired is found in the declaration to that effect by the writers themselves. That these writers were delegated by Divine Providence to a supernatural work, is shown by the thousands of miracles performed by them. The truth of these miracles is beyond doubt. All the ingenuity of sceptics has failed to shake the evidence upon which their authenticity rests.

8. *Why are the Scriptures divided into the Old and New Testaments?*

In order to mark a distinction between the books held sacred by both Jews and Christians, and those received only by Christians.

9. The Old Testament consists of thirty-nine books termed "canonical," and fourteen "apocryphal." The New Testament contains twenty-seven books; viz.,

five historical, twenty-one hortatory, and one, the last, of a mixed hortatory and prophetical character.

10. *Why are some of the books of the Old Testament called "canonical," while others are termed "apocryphal"?*

Because about the genuineness of the former there has never been any doubt in the universal Church; with regard to the latter, the word applied collectively to them signifies that the evidence about them is not so clear. The estimation in which the Church of England holds the books of the Old and New Testament, and those of the Apocrypha, may be gathered from her sixth Article.

11. The word Canon, from the Greek *kanon*, means *straight*, or a *straight rule*. As applied to the present subject, it means the authoritative standard of religion and morals. Apocrypha signifies *secret, hidden*. The Church of England recommends the perusal of the latter as beneficial to faith and morals, although it doubts their full authority in determining questions of doctrine.

12. *By what means have the Scriptures of the Old Testament been handed down to us from the remote period of antiquity at which they were written?*

The same Providence that directed their execution would, of course, watch over their transmission to us. It is probable that, as well as the law, the other sacred books were preserved in, or by, the ark of the covenant; and Josephus informs us that the law was among the spoils which graced the triumph of the Emperor Titus when he returned from the destruction of Jerusalem.

PAPYRUS, THE EARLIEST KNOWN MATERIAL USED FOR PORTABLE WRITINGS.

13. Copies of the original Hebrew text have descended to our times in manuscripts written upon skins of animals, and dating from the 12th century.

Greek and Latin Versions.

14. *Why was the Septuagint version of the Old Testament so named?*

Because it was said to have been the work of seventy translators.

15. The tradition which was received by all the early fathers and by the rabbins was to this effect:—Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, when forming a library at great expense, was advised by Demetrius Phalereus to apply to the Jewish high priest, Eleazar, for a copy of the book containing the Jewish laws. Having been a great friend and benefactor of the Jews, he had no difficulty in obtaining this. He then requested Eleazar to send him learned scribes, for the purpose of translating the books into Greek. Seventy-two interpreters were selected, and sent, six out of each tribe of Israel. Having been despatched accordingly with a magnificent copy of the law, they were received and entertained by the king for several days with great respect and liberality. Demetrius led them to an island, where they lodged together. The translation was finished in seventy-two days, having been written down by Demetrius, piece by piece, as agreed upon after mutual consultation. It was then publicly read by Demetrius to a number of Jews, whom he had summoned together. They approved of it, and imprecations were uttered against any one who should presume to alter it. The Jews requested to take copies of it for their use, and it was carefully preserved by command of the king. The interpreters were then sent home loaded with presents.

16. *What is the meaning of the word Vulgate?*

It is derived from the Latin word *vulgata*, "common," and is applied to the Latin version of the Scriptures made by St. Jerome, between the years 382 and 405 of our era, because it was intended for the common use of Christians throughout the world.

17. The olden Latin versions, which were very numerous, and some of them very imperfect, were superseded by this of St. Jerome. A version used authoritatively before is called the Old Vulgate. About two hundred years after the death of its author, the Vulgate became almost universally admitted, although it received no official sanction until the Council of Trent. This Latin version is remarkable, also, as being the first book ever printed. The earliest printed editions are without date; the earliest dated editions bear that of 1462.

18. *Why is the "authorized" version of the Scriptures so called?*

Because translated from the original tongues, and appointed to be read in churches, by special command or authorization of King James I., A.D. 1611.

19. This work originated with Dr. John Rainolds, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Forty-seven persons were engaged upon it. They met in companies at

different places, having their respective tasks assigned them. The whole was revised by twelve men together, two having been chosen out of each of the six companies. The ultimate revision was made by Dr. Miles Smith and Dr. Bilson. The whole expense was defrayed by Barker, who had a patent for its publication.

ENGLISH PRINTED BIBLES.

Previously to the publication of the "authorized version," there had been—

I. WYCLIFFE'S VERSION.

John Wycliffe was born at a village near Richmond, in Yorkshire, about the year 1324. In 1360 his name is first mentioned in connection with some controversies with the friars or regular clergy of that period. He graduated at Queen's College, Oxford; from thence he removed to Merton College. He assumed great austerity of life and demeanour, and held in his public sermons that the Pope, the higher clergy, and the priests were bound to imitate our Saviour in poverty as well as in virtue. He established an order called "poor priests," who were clad like himself, refused to accept of any benefice, and itinerated with the permission or against the orders of the bishops. Wycliffe was protected by the Duke of Lancaster ultimately accepted a benefice, and died while assisting at the mass offered by his curate on Innocent's Day, 1384. The author, although a man of zeal and of moderate learning, was ignorant of the Hebrew and Greek languages; consequently his Bible was only a rendering from the Latin Vulgate. There are indications in it of his having received the assistance of other hands.

II. TYNDALE'S TRANSLATION.

William Tyndale was born about 1477 at Hunt's Court, in the parish of Nibley, in Gloucestershire. He was sent to Oxford, whence he removed to Cambridge. Leaving that university he became tutor to Sir John Welch, of Little Sodbury, in his native county. He appears to have awakened fears among his friends on account of his advanced opinions in religious matters; and he fled first to London and thence to Saxony, where he is said to have met Luther. He next settled at Antwerp, where he executed his translation. He was strangled at the Castle of Villefort, near Brussels, at the instance of Henry VIII. The language of Tyndale's version, which is from the original tongues, is pure, appropriate, and perspicuous. It is an astonishing monument of the indomitable zeal, learning, and perseverence of its author.

III. COVERDALE'S VERSION.

Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter (A.D. 1551), was a native of Yorkshire, and born in 1487. He was educated in the house of the Augustinian Friars in Cambridge, under Prior Barnes. He became a monk, and in 1514 was ordained a priest at Norwich. About 1531 Coverdale showed himself a Protestant by his conversation and sermons. He went abroad about this time, and probably assisted Tyndale in

his translation. In 1535 his own version appeared, with a dedication to Henry VIII. The psalms in it are those now used in the Book of Common Prayer. Coverdale was almoner to Queen Catherine Parr. On the accession of Mary, Coverdale was imprisoned, but afterwards released by her, and he went into exile to the Court of Denmark. He afterwards went to Geneva, where he assisted in preparing the "Geneva translation." Coverdale returned from exile, but having imbibed the views of the Calvinists at Geneva, he was not allowed by his co-protestants at home to resume his bishopric. At his death he was rector of Saint Magnus, near London Bridge.

This version is reckoned inferior to Tyndale's Bible. Its author was not skilful in the original languages of the Scriptures, and translated from the German and Latin. Cromwell, Henry VIII.'s minister, was the chief instrument in introducing this version.

IV. MATTHEW'S BIBLE

Is another and revised edition of Tyndale's. Its first edition was produced in 1537; another edition was published in 1539.

V. TAVERNER'S BIBLE.

Richard Taverner, the editor of this work, was a learned layman. His Bible was published in London, 1539, folio. Two other editions were published in quarto. It is not a new version, but a correction of Matthew's.

VI. CRANMER'S BIBLE.

Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, is too well known to need any further notice. The first great Bible, with a prologue by him, was published in 1540, folio. Three subsequent editions had this prelate's name affixed to the title-page.

VII. GENEVA BIBLE

Was the work of William Wittingham and some other Nonconformists. It appears to have been begun in 1558, and completed in 1560. This was the first English Bible printed with the Roman letter; previous editions had been in the Gothic or "black-letter."

VIII. PARKER'S, OR THE BISHOP'S BIBLE.

Archbishop Parker was a native of Norwich: he was born in 1504, and educated at Cambridge. Being intended for the Church he applied himself diligently to Biblical learning. He was selected by Wolsey as one of the professors of the new college which he intended to found at Oxford. Parker, however, declined the honour: he was preferred under Henry VIII. and Edward VI., but deprived by Mary. By Elizabeth he was made Archbishop of Canterbury. During the fifteen years that he held the primacy he promoted the Reformation to the best of his ability. He died in 1575. Parker's Bible was published in 1568, at London, in one

English Printed Bibles.

folio volume: it was superintended by the Archbishop, the text being carefully revised after the originals by fifteen scholars, eight of whom were bishops. Different portions were assigned to different individuals, the initials of whose names are placed at the end of their several parts. It was not, as is generally supposed, undertaken at the royal command. The text of this translation is considered much better than that of any preceding one.

20. *Why are certain words in the authorized version of the English Bible printed in italics?*

To show that those particular words have been inserted or interpolated to elucidate or improve the sense, and were not in the original text, whether Hebrew, Chaldaic, or Greek.

21. *Why is the Roman Catholic version of the Holy Scriptures called the "Douay Bible," and the "Rhemish Testament"?*

Because the former—a translation from the Latin Vulgate—was first published by the English college at Douay, in Belgium (A.D. 1609), and the latter, also from the Latin Vulgate, was first made and issued from another English college at Rheims (A.D. 1582).

22. These are the only versions used by the Catholic laity: they are very literal in their rendering, but not so elegant as the authorized version in use among Protestants. The Douay Bible and Rhemish Testament are accompanied by annotations of a very brief character.

23. *Why is the mark ¶, or paragraph, used at certain distances in the authorized version of the English Bible?*

To denote that at that point of the psalm, chapter, or discourse, a new subject has commenced.

24. This division into paragraphs was adopted for convenience sake by the translators of this version, who were also the authors of the headings to the chapters. The division into chapters of the Old and New Testaments assumed its present form about the middle of the 13th century, and is ascribed by some to Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. It is hardly necessary to state that the prefaces or contents do not in any way partake of the sacred authoritative character of the text.

B.C. 4004.—The Five Books of Moses.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE PENTATEUCH, OR FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

25. *Why are the first five books of the Biblical collection called the Pentateuch?*

From the two Greek words, *pente*, "five," and *teuchos*, "a volume," *i. e.*, "the five-fold volume," or "instrument."

26. An universal and most ancient tradition declares the Pentateuch to be the work of Moses, the first Divine lawgiver. Any attacks upon their authenticity have been met by the best and most solid answers; and when it is considered that the whole weight of evidence furnished by the existence, the history, and the institutions of the Jewish people rests upon their truth, nothing further in the way of proof appears necessary.

"The books of Moses, no monument, either historical or astronomical, has yet been able to prove false; but with them, on the contrary, agree, in the most remarkable manner, the results obtained by the most learned philosophers and the profoundest geometricians." *

27. *Why is the first book of Moses called Genesis?*

Because that word, with which it commences, signifies "creation," "origin," "first;" implying that this portion of the sacred writings contains an account of the origin or creation of the world and its inhabitants.

28. It was customary with the Hebrews to designate any portions of their sacred literature by the first word contained in them. The commencing word of Genesis in the Hebrew is BERESHITH "in the beginning." In the Hebrew Bible, the first book of Moses has no title. Its present one was prefixed to it by those who translated it into Greek.

Genesis contains, besides the account of the creation and apostasy of man, a history of the deluge and of the first patriarchs, to the death of Joseph.

29. *Why does the Bible commence with these words, "In the beginning"?*

Because, although the formation out of nothing of this earth, with its inhabitants, may not have been the first creative act of the Deity, it was so as far as man is concerned. The idea of *Time* commences only at this point.

30. The original cause of all things must be God, who in a moment spoke, and heaven and earth were made; heaven with all the angels, and the whole mass of

* Balbi, *Atlas Ethnographique du Globe.*

the elements, in a state of confusion and blended together, out of which the beautiful order, which was afterwards so admirable, arose in the space of six days.

31. *Why was the earth said to be created in six days?*

It is generally admitted that the term "day" here has a figurative meaning; and the phrase "six days" may be understood to indicate the order and progress of creation, rather than the time it occupied.

32. Because we learn from various parts of the sacred writings, as well as from analogy, that time was not a necessary ingredient in the work of creation. "He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were brought forth;" and similar phrases, express the fact that, with the act of will on the part of the Creator, His works at once started into being. Indeed, strictly speaking, the very notion of growth or progression seems repugnant to that of creation.

33. *Why was man said to be created in the image and likeness of God?*

Because he is endued with the power of understanding and choice, which the lower creation have not.

34. This image is rather to be found in the soul than the body of man, although, from Christ's assuming human nature, we may assert that man bears a resemblance to God both in soul and body.

35. *Why is God said to have rested the seventh day?*

Because He then ceased to make any new kind of things.

36. St. Paul says that what happened beforehand happened by way of figure; and the particular mention here made of the seventh day as one of rest, and of its sanctification, was no doubt intended to foreshow the institution of a sabbatical or weekly rest from labour. (See Exod. xx. 8.)

37. *Why was the Garden of Eden or Paradise formed?*

In order that man, as the chief tenant, or rather as the lord of the newly-formed world, might be provided with a dwelling suitable to his wants, and replete with every charm and convenience.

38. *Why was the Garden of Eden so called?*

From the Hebrew word signifying pleasure.

39. It is not decided whether this is the name of a particular spot or of a tract of country. A difficulty of ascertaining its whereabouts would necessarily result from

the general disruption of the earth's surface at the universal flood; so that our not finding its site at present is in no way remarkable.

40. *Why were the trees "of life" and "of the knowledge of good and evil" planted in the midst of Eden?*

Because, being invested with the power and dignity of free will, God wished to give Adam the means of testing his obedience to the Divine behests.

41. Hence the one only precept given to man in Paradise: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The *tree of life* was so called because it had that quality, that by eating of the fruit of it, man would have been preserved in a constant state of health, vigour, and strength, and would not have died at all.

The *tree of knowledge* could not communicate any real wisdom to man; but, by eating of its forbidden fruit, he dearly purchased the knowledge of evil, to which before he was a stranger.

42. *Why was the first man named Adam?*

From *Adamah*, a Hebrew word signifying red earth, or dust from the ground.

43. Under the simple archaic phrase, "dust from the ground," is fairly to be understood a truth which is verified by the analysis of modern chemistry. The human body, submitted to this test, proves to be a combination of carbon, hydrogen, lime, and, in fact, of all those materials of which the dust of the earth itself is composed.

44. *Why did God set Adam to name the animals?*

That he might, by an attentive survey of the lower creation, experience their utter inadequacy to his wants as companions or associates, and thus be led to desire the intended gift of Eve as "a help meet for him."

45. *Why is the formation of Eve out of a rib of Adam to be taken literally?*

Because such an interpretation is the most reasonable and consistent. Adam having been formed *immediately* from the dust of the earth, Eve was taken *mediately* from the same source, by being formed from the substance of her husband.

46. *Why did our first parents eat of the forbidden fruit?*

The lamentable answer to this portentous question is only to

be found in the fact, that preferring the gratification of their curiosity and appetite, to the observance of the Divine prohibition, they chose of their own free will to do so.

47. *What is the meaning of the phrase, "and the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked," etc.?*

It means that they became conscious of offence, or of a breach of the Divine commandment, and from that consciousness sought to conceal themselves.

48. The text says, "they sewed together fig-leaves, and made themselves aprons." But the word translated *sewed*, rather implies twisted; and the fact probably was, that our first parents took the tender branches of the fig (*teenah*) tree and twined them together much in the way that the aborigines of some countries do at the present time.

FIG-LEAVES. (Gen. iii. 7.)

49. *What followed the eating of the forbidden fruit?*

A curse was pronounced upon Adam and his posterity, upon the earth for his sake, and in particular upon the serpent, which had been the instrument used by Satan in the temptation of man. Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden of Paradise, and doomed to wander upon the earth, and to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow.

50. *What promise was made to our first parents after their expulsion from the Garden of Eden?*

It was promised that a future deliverer should be raised up—the Messiah—called the seed of the woman, who should "bruise the head of the serpent," while the latter should have power to "bruise his heel."

51. *Why is the term "seed of the woman" applied to Christ?*

Because, as regarded His human nature, He was the offspring

of a woman only, and not of any man—the mother of Jesus having been a pure virgin notwithstanding her maternity.

52. *Why is the Messiah, or Christ, said to crush the head of the serpent (or Satan)?*

Because by the head is symbolized power, rule, or dominion; the work of our Saviour was to diminish and ultimately destroy this power, and so crush the head of the serpent.

53. *Why is Christ's heel said to be bruised by Satan?*

Because, as the heel is the lowest part of the body, it represents the human nature of Jesus, which his eternal Father permitted to be bruised in the sufferings and death he underwent upon the cross.

54. *Why did Cain, the first-born of Adam and Eve, kill his brother Abel?*

From a motive of envy or jealousy of his brother's acceptance with God.

55. It is probable that the Divine favour was exhibited towards Abel by some manifest sign, as by sending fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice. There can be no doubt that this was the result of Abel's merit, as he is by Jesus Christ himself denominated "the righteous" (Matt. xxiii. 35). The sacrifices of the brothers appear to have been equal in all other respects. Cain, as a husbandman, brought of the first-fruits of the field; Abel, as a shepherd, offered the firstlings of his flock. The important difference was in the dispositions with which the sacrifices were offered.

56. *Why was a mark set upon Cain?*

The text says, "Lest any man finding him should kill him;" from which we may infer that the act of murder committed against his brother, must have stamped such an indelible impression of horror or aversion upon Cain as might induce his fellow-men, upon meeting him, to seek his death.

57. What this preventive mark was, is not said. The reader is left to form his own conjecture.

Cain is said, after the birth of Enoch, to have built a city. The descendants of Adam were then already numerous enough to require the use of one. From which it is clear that a great many transactions took place about this period which are not recorded in the sacred volume. This leads at once to the observation that the Bible is not a history of the world. It gives an account of the origin of the world, and of the creation and fall of man; after this it confines its records to those of one

B.C. 3875.—The Term of Human Life Shortened.

family or nation only, namely, the seed of Abraham, in whom all the tribes of the earth should be blessed.

This is made clear by the contents of the fifth chapter of Genesis, which is a genealogy of the patriarchs from Adam to Noah. The fourth verse says—"And the days of Adam, after he begot Seth, were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters." Yet nothing is recorded of these, not even their names.

58. *Why did the first patriarchs attain such extreme longevity?*

Because it was of the first necessity that the world should be filled and replenished by their offspring; and by such a length of days the Divine traditions were enabled to be the better handed down to their descendants.

59. *Why was Enoch translated?*

Because of his distinguished sanctity, the term used in the text, "walked with God," implying that he lived in continued recollection of, or meditation on, the presence of God.

60. The phrase, "he was not, for God took him," might be supposed to mean merely that he was removed prematurely from the earth by a sudden death; but St. Paul (Heb. xi. 5) says distinctly that Enoch was translated that he should not see death.

61. *Why was the term of human life now shortened?*

Because of the degeneracy of the human race, the majority of whom had departed from the primitive faith and worship.

62. *Why is God said to have repented that He had made man?*

God, who is unchangeable, is not capable of repentance, grief, or other passion. But these expressions are used to declare the enormity of the sins of men, which was so provoking as to determine their Creator to destroy these His creatures, whom before He had so much favoured.

63. *Why was Noah commanded to build the ark?*

Because the iniquity of mankind had determined God to sweep them from the face of the earth; Noah and his family, alone, with two of every kind of animals, being reserved alive in the ark.

64. The ark of Noah was a house made capable of floating—not a ship, as has been frequently supposed, and as frequently represented in pictures. It was

intended to repose idly upon the waters of the flood, not for sailing or for progression. The Scripture account says merely, "Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and thou shalt pitch it within and without." The length, "300 cubits;" the breath, "50 cubits;" the height, "30 cubits;" the door at the side, and the window in the roof, include all the particulars given.

65. *Why was Noah directed to take with him into the ark couples of every species of animals found in that region?*

Because such a course was necessary to their preservation alive, and that upon the subsidence of the waters they might be ready for the use or delectation of Noah and his family.

66. The difficulty of providing in the ark for the care and subsistence of a pair of *every* species of animal vanishes when we consider, with the best commentators, that only such animals were included as were to be found in the parts of Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe, which then comprehended the world. The whole world had not been peopled—probably not one twentieth part of it; and it is reasonable to suppose that the flood extended only to such a portion as was inhabited. This consideration would reduce the animals to be preserved in the ark of Noah to a comparatively small number.

67. *Why is the fact of the universal deluge to be received apart from the Divine sanction of the Biblical narrative?*

Because the tradition of a deluge, by which the race of man was swept from the face of the earth, has been found in all nations, civilized or uncivilized.

68. On this point the historical and mythological testimonies are very clear and conclusive. They are to be met with among the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Goths, Druids, Chinese, Hindoos, Burmese, Mexicans, Peruvians, Brazilians, the inhabitants of New Caledonia, and the islands of the Pacific; and among most of them the belief has prevailed that a certain family was preserved in an ark, ship, boat, or raft, to replenish the desolated earth with inhabitants. Corroborative evidence is also met with on coins and monuments of stone. Of the latter are the sculptures of Egypt and of India, and the "kistvaen" of the Druids.

69. *Why did the ark occupy so many years in building?*

That the people might benefit by the continual warning afforded by its gradual erection, and the preaching of Noah.

70. God mercifully afforded a respite of one hundred and twenty years between the first announcement and the fulfilment of His threat of the universal flood, during which Noah sought to work salutary impressions upon his neighbours and the unbelieving world, and to bring them to repentance. Thus he was a "preacher

B.C. 2469.—The Tower of Babel.

of righteousness" (Heb. xi. 7), exercising faith in the testimony of God, moved with holy reverence and fear, and by the contrast of his conduct condemning the world.

71. *Why is the ark considered to be a figure of Baptism?*

Because it is stated to be so by the Apostle St. Peter, thus: "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient. When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us." (1 Peter iii. 19—21.)

72. *Why were Noah and his descendants prohibited the eating of blood?*

Because it was intended as a mark of distinction and a test of obedience, and was a preliminary to the regular establishment of the Jewish law.

73. *Why is the mention of Asshur* (Gen. x. 11) *especially interesting?*

Because the monuments and sculptures attributed to that person or his dynasty being in our possession,* we are enabled to form some idea of the appearance and characteristics of the people of those remote ages.

74. *Why was the Tower of Babel built?*

Because the descendants of Noah feared a second deluge, and sought, by the erection of a very high structure, to avert some of its consequences.

75. It appears that the primitive fathers of mankind having, from the time of the deluge, wandered without fixed abode, settled at length in the land of Shinar, where they took up a permanent residence. As yet they had remained together without experiencing any inconvenience, and were all of one language. Finding suitable materials, they proceeded to the construction of brick buildings, using the bitumen abounding thereabout for mortar. A city was built, and the tower mentioned in the text. A Divine interference now takes place. The language of the builders is confounded, so that they are no longer able to understand each other; they therefore leave off to build the city, and are scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth.

* At the British Museum, see Assyrian Rooms.

B.C. 2233.—The Confusion of Tongues.

76. *Why was the place called Babel?*

From the Hebrew word *Babel,* confusion. Josephus, quoting the "Sibyl," says: "When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven; but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave every one his peculiar language; and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon."

77. That the tower was subsequently completed is certain from the best historical evidences.

78. *Why were the tongues of men confounded?*

Because it was the intention of Divine Providence that the people should scatter or distribute themselves over the whole renovated earth.

79. This confusion of tongues is one of the greatest miracles recorded in the Old Testament: men forgot in a moment the language which they had hitherto spoken, and found themselves enabled to speak another, known only to a few of the same family, for we must not suppose that there were as many new languages as there were men at Babel. The precise number of original languages then heard for the first time cannot be determined. The Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Teutonic, Sclavonian, Tartarian, and Chinese languages are considered to be original, the rest are only dialects from them.

80. *Why is the account of the dispersion of the people followed by the genealogy of Shem?*

Because he was the ancestor of the chosen people of the Jews, and hence the genealogy was of great importance.

81. After the confusion of their language, the various families were forced to move forward, and to seek settlements over different parts of the world. At this early period of the world, kingdoms, properly so-called, did not exist: the people lived more like the present Tartar or Mongol tribes of northern Asia, than like the states and cities of Europe; and the authority of the patriarch and other old men of the tribe was sufficient for the maintenance of order.

Nimrod, of whom the Scripture says that "he was a mighty hunter before the Lord," was the first to attempt to found a dominion by force. He was of the doomed family of Ham, and settled on the Euphrates, where he built the cities of Babel or Babylon, Erech, Accad, and Calneh. Asshur, of the family of Shem, settled on the Tigris, and built Nineveh, which was afterwards the centre of the Assyrian empire, and which is subsequently so often mentioned in the Biblical history. Elam, the second son of Shem, settled to the east, and from him came the Medes and Persians, who formed the second of the four great empires of Daniel's dream. The kingdom of Nimrod did not last long, for Noah had foretold that Ham should be a servant of his brethren; and after several wars his race was expelled by the

B.C. 1921.—Origin of Idolatry.

Assyrians of Nineveh, and forced to settle at a distance, probably in Arabia. Of these early times, however, very little is known from any source, except the short notices contained in the Bible. The wars in the time of Abraham appear to have been between the rival families of Shem and Ham.

82. *Why was Abram called to depart from his country and kindred?*

Because (1) a trial of his obedience was required, and (2) that he might take possession of the land (Canaan) which was to be the inheritance of the people of Israel, his seed, and the scene of those stupendous events upon which the whole Bible history hinges.

83. Abram was a native of Chaldea, and descended through Heber (the patriarch from whose name the term Hebrew is derived) in the ninth generation from Noah. His father was Terah, who had two other sons, Nahor and Haran. The latter died before his father Terah, leaving a son, Lot, and two daughters, Milcah and Iscah. Lot attached himself to Abram, his uncle. Milcah became the wife of Nahor (her uncle), and Iscah, who was also called Sarai, married Abram.

His first migration was from Ur, of the Chaldees, to Charran. After dwelling at the latter place for several years, his second migration is ordered, and he departs with Sarai, Lot, and their households, to Canaan, resting at Sichem. From thence he removed to the east of Bethel, then proceeding further south, and at length, on account of the famine, going down into Egypt.

84. *Why did not Abram during the famine return to his friends?*

Because it was the purpose of Divine Providence to isolate him from them.

85. The Jewish traditions represent Abram's father and uncle as absorbed in the idolatrous practices of the time, and this may have been one reason of his departure southward.

86. *Why did men invent such a multiplicity of false gods?*

Because, losing by degrees the true tradition and becoming corrupted, they fell back upon their imaginations and fancies to supply its place.

87. Tradition says, that Noah gave his children seven commandments, which were the foundations of the notions of right and wrong that are common to all people. From him all the nations carried away with them into their different settlements the belief in a future Messiah from the family of Shem, the knowledge of God and of His future day of judgment; as also of the duty of prayer, and of observing the Sabbath with sacrifices. Such was the simple and plain religion which Noah, whom St. Paul calls a preacher of righteousness, taught to his sons; and this is what would have con-

B.C. 1920.—Abram in Egypt.

tinued in the world if the nations had preserved uncorrupted what they received from the patriarch. Instead, however, of continuing to worship the God of heaven, the pure Spirit who cannot be seen, they began to seek objects of worship which were visible; and thus they were led to make images which after a time came to be regarded as gods. Of these visible objects of worship, the first were the Sun, the Moon, and Fire as an element. Next they took the image which had been set up in honour of some king or statesman, and began to pay it divine honours. An example of this is seen in the figures of Nimrod preserved in the British Museum. From the custom of embalming the dead, and preserving them in places where the surviving members of the family could visit them from time to time, they came to offer sacrifices to deceased members of their own families and to look upon them as gods. In all this the great enemy of mankind was engaged, as we read in the New Testament epistles.

NIMROD, OR NIMROUD.

The progress of this idolatry is shown in the annexed drawings. Fig. 1 is an Egyptian mummy, or the embalmed body of some member of an Egyptian family. Figs. 2, 3, are from the sculptures upon Egyptian monuments, representing the gods as they were publicly worshipped. They show how the figure of the embalmed corpse became the pattern which the workmen who made the idols for the use of the temples took for their model. Figs. 4 to 7 show the further progress of corruption, by borrowing from the brute creation, and by degrading the representation of God to the point of placing the heads of brute creatures upon a human shape; and lastly, Fig. 8 shows how, in the end, they came to the form of a complete four-footed beast.

This latter was the god Apis, held in the utmost veneration in Egypt. It was from this idol, or rather living animal—for the living animal was worshipped—that the Israelites in the wilderness took the idea of requiring Aaron to make for them the image of the golden calf. St. Paul says (Rom. i. 21), "When they knew God they glorified Him not as God, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

88. *Why did Abram, when in Egypt, pretend that his wife Sarai was his sister only?*

Because her great beauty might have tempted the Egyptians to kill Abram in order to obtain possession of her person.

89. Calling Sarai his sister left him without risk with the Egyptians. The fame of her charms appears soon to have reached the king's ears, who sent for her, and Abram was used well for her sake. But God vindicated the honour of his servants

B.C. 1920.—Progress of Idolatry.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

Fig. 7.

Fig. 8.

by plaguing Pharaoh, who very soon dismissed Abram and Sarai, loading them with presents and hurrying them away.

It may be thought strange that a miraculous interference should have been necessary to convince Abimelech of his criminality in retaining the wife of Abram; and equally strange that Abram could not procure Sarai's release by proper application and request. But such thoughts arise only from ignorance of the customs of the East. Whenever a woman is taken into the harem of an oriental prince with the design of making her his wife, she is secluded without a probability of egress—at least during the life of the prince on the throne. Nor is communication with women in the harem in ordinary cases to be obtained. This view places the interference of Providence, on behalf of Abram, in the strongest light, and offers some excuse for the culpable dissimulation of the patriarch, and later of Isaac under similar circumstance (Gen. xxvii. 7). The life of a husband, it may be easily understood, had but a small chance of being preserved when it stood in the way of despotic indulgence.

90. *Whither did Abram go?*

He returned to his former residence between Bethel and Hai.

91. *Why was Abram blessed by Melchisedek?*

Because of the great services rendered to his neighbours by his conquest of the four kings.

92. That part of Canaan had been subjugated by the Assyrian monarchy. The four kings, Chedorlaomer and his confederates, appear to have been viceroys, or governors, of the conquered cities of the plain—Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim. The kings of these cities, after a submission of twelve years, made an effort to throw off their yoke; it was in this endeavour that they were defeated, and Lot was taken prisoner. Abram, collecting his family and dependents, rushed to the rescue, and, doubtless aided by the Divine blessing, defeated the Assyrians. It was upon his return from this victory that the blessing of Melchisedek was conferred.

93. *Why is the name of Melchisedek so often referred to in Scripture?*

Because he was, like others of the patriarchs and prophets, a type of the promised Messiah.

94. *Why did Abram take Hagar to wife?*

At the suggestion of Sarai, who despaired of becoming a mother.

95. *Why was Hagar afterwards expelled from her house by Sarai?*

Because, growing proud of her position as the mother of Abram's son, she despised her mistress.

B.C. 1871.—Abraham Offers up Isaac.

96. *Why did Hagar call her child Ishmael?*

Because she wished to commemorate by that name the answer to her prayer, the word *Ishmael* signifying "God hears."

97. *Why was the rite of circumcision instituted?*

In order to mark by an outward sign the covenant made with God by Abram, whose name was now changed to Abraham.

98. *Why was the name of this patriarch changed?*

It was a part of the symbolization which marked the renewal at this time of God's promises to Abraham.

99. *Abram*, in the Hebrew, signifies a "high father," but *Abraham*, the "father of a multitude." The reason for the change is also given in the text (Gen. xvii. 5), "For a father of many nations have I made thee."

Sarai's name was also changed to Sarah; the first meant simply "lady," the second, "a great lady or princess."

100. *Why did the three angels appear to Abraham?*

Because it was necessary by such a mark of Divine favour to strengthen his faith in the promise of an heir.

101. *Why were the cities of the plain destroyed?*

Because of the great wickedness of their inhabitants, which seems to have exceeded that of all other nations, before or since.

102. *Why was Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt?*

As a terrible mark of the anger of God towards the devoted cities, a momentary sympathy with whose inhabitants seems to have called down this signal punishment. God may have inflicted this temporal punishment on her, and saved her soul.

103. *Why was Abraham commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac?*

Because a further proof of his faith in the promises of God was required of him, and as a final test of his obedience.

104. The account of Abraham's offering, as contained in Gen. xxii., is perhaps the most truly affecting narrative in the whole sacred volume: it is almost impossible to read it without strong emotion.

105. *Who was Rebekah?*

She was the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother.

B.C. 1856.—Esau and Jacob.

106. *Why was she chosen as the wife of Isaac?*

Because of her kindred—Abraham wishing to avoid a marriage with the Canaanites on the part of his son.

107. *Who was Laban?*

He was the brother of Rebekah.

108. *Why was Esau so named?*

On account of the redness of his skin, the word Esau being rendered *red*, "or covered with hair."

109. The name of Edom (red) was afterwards applied to him from the red pottage, for a mess of which, when fatigued and exhausted with hunting, Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother.

110. *Why was the name of Jacob given to the younger son of Isaac?*

Because of the circumstances attending his birth, when he wrestled with his brother and sought to supplant him; the word signifying *a wrestler*, or "one who supplants."

111. It would seem that the patriarchs were all more or less endued with the gift of prophecy, the names given to their offspring being generally significant of the course of their after-life. In the case of Jacob this is especially remarkable, since his whole career was but a commentary upon the text which his name presents. He supplanted his brother in various ways, and wrestled not only with him, but with the Divine messenger or angel of God himself (Gen. xxxii. 24).*

112. *Why did Jacob flee into Mesopotamia?*

Because, having obtained by fraud the blessing his father Isaac intended for Esau, he feared the effects of his brother's anger.

113. *What were the circumstances under which Jacob married Rachel and Leah?*

Fleeing from the wrath of Esau, he came to the house of his uncle Laban the Syrian, the son of Bethuel. Here he first saw Rachel, Laban's younger and favourite daughter, and covenanted to serve him seven years for her sake. At the

* From the birth of these twins St. Gregory shows the folly of astrologers, who pretend that our actions are under the influence of the planets, and that two born at the same time will have the same fate. How different were the lives of Jacob and Esau!

B.C. 1739.—Jacob Wrestles with the Angel.

expiration of that period Laban deceived him by substituting Leah for Rachel (Gen. xxix. 23); but the marriage week being completed, Rachel is also given to Jacob, and he consents to serve Laban another seven years for her.

114. It is still customary among Oriental nations to keep up the marriage festivities for seven days, during which time all the guests are merry and joyful, and all care and anxiety are put aside.

115. *Why did Jacob remain six years longer with Laban?*

Because the latter, who was a harsh and avaricious man, objected to his departure, consenting, however, to Jacob's proposal for a better remuneration.

116. This proposal was, that Jacob should receive as his share all the spotted and speckled sheep and goats of the various flocks; but Laban, in accordance with his usual mode of procedure, at once set to work to avoid the bargain. He separated the white and black from the speckled portion of his flocks, and placed a three days' journey between them, so that no increase might be made in Jacob's portion. The patriarch, however, it would seem, by the Divine direction, took means to circumvent the knavery of Laban (Gen. xxix. 37), and with the most successful results: the speckled portion increasing exceedingly.

117. *Why did Jacob leave Laban's house clandestinely?*

Because his former experience led him to believe that otherwise he would not be suffered to depart.

118. *Why did Jacob wrestle with the angel?*

That he might learn, by this experience of the Divine favour, that neither Laban, Esau, nor any other man should have power to hurt him.

119. Although the person with whom Jacob wrestled is in the text called a man, we learn from Hosea (xii. 4) that it was an angel in human shape.

120. *Why was Jacob's name, after his contest with the angel, changed to Israel?*

To mark his victorious character, the word Israel being compounded of *Issor-al*, a prince of God.

121. *Whence is the word "Jew" derived?*

From Judah, the fourth son of Jacob by Leah.

B.C. 1730.—Joseph Sold into Egypt.

122. The names of the twelve sons of Jacob, with their signification, are :—

Reuben, son of vision.	Gad, a troop.
Simeon, bearing.	Asher, happy.
Levi, joined.	Issachar, a hire or wages.
Judah, praise.	Zebulun, dwelling.
Dan, judging.	Joseph, adding.
Naphtali, my wrestling.	Benjamin, son of the right hand.

123. *Why was Joseph hated by his brethren?*

Because of the preference shown him by his father, who loved him as the child of his old age, but still more on account of his innocent and ingenuous character.

124. *Why did Joseph dream prophetic dreams?*

Because it was the purpose of God to make him the instrument of his will with regard to the preservation of the human race, and the ultimate destinies of the Jewish people.

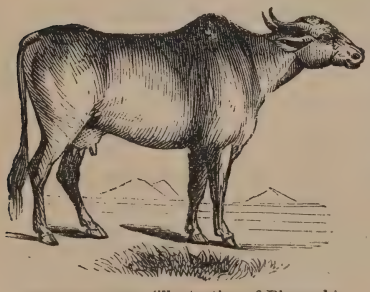
125. Joseph was undoubtedly a type of Jesus Christ, and his history is to be regarded as foreshadowing the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory that was to follow.

126. *Why was Joseph sold by his brethren to the Ishmaelites?*

Because they thought that thus they would more easily rid themselves of the presence of one whose life and conduct were a contrast and a reproach to their own.

127. *Why was Joseph cast into prison in Egypt?*

Because, being transferred by the Ishmaelites to the service of Potiphar (an officer of the King of Egypt), and placed by him over his household, refusing the wicked solicitations of his mistress, he was falsely accused by her of an attempt upon her chastity.



EGYPTIAN COW (illustrative of Pharaoh's dream, Gen. xli.)

128. *Why was Joseph released from prison?*

Because, possessing the supernatural gift of the interpretation of dreams, he was called upon to re-

solve the meaning of one dreamed by Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

129. He had previously interpreted those of the king's chief butler and chief baker, his fellow-prisoners. The striking fulfilment of their visions should have met with a better result for Joseph; but as with men in general, the fortunate court-officer, when restored to favour and prosperity, forgot his friend Joseph, who remained to suffer two years more of unmerited incarceration, when he was sent for by Pharaoh.

EGYPTIAN STEWARD PRESENTING MEATS.

The dream of Pharaoh's chief baker is interesting in connection with the light thrown upon its details by certain sculptures at present in the British Museum. That officer had forfeited in some way the royal favour: he was thrust into prison, (with what justice or for how long a period we are not informed). While here he dreams a dream, which he relates to Joseph, his fellow-captive. Unhappily it presages that the State officer shall shortly suffer death. But we may glance at the circumstance that while the unfortunate functionary *was conveying upon his head* prepared meats for Pharaoh, the birds of the air came and devoured a portion of them. The annexed illustration shows how readily this might have been done, especially when it is considered that many of the Egyptian halls were open to the sky.

130. *Why did the sons of Jacob go down to Egypt?*

On account of the famine which overspread for seven years that part of the world.

131. Joseph's fore-knowledge enabled him to provide for this, and Egypt became one vast granary, to which of necessity all the surrounding nations resorted. The famine came, but it found a prepared people. Joseph had been appointed viceroy or governor over all the land, and it is probable that he anticipated the visit of his brethren, and was prepared for it with a plan of action.

132. *Why did Joseph receive his brethren with harshness?*

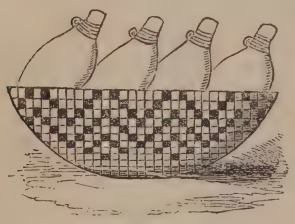
Because he wished to bring them to a sense of their former wickedness and to humble them.

B.C. 1707.—Jacob Goes Down to Egypt.

133. *Why is Joseph said to have enslaved the Egyptians?*

Because the famine was of such a grievous nature that, having parted with all their treasure to purchase corn from the royal granaries, the Egyptians had no alternative, in order to preserve life, but to part with their lands, and finally their liberties.

134. A striking proof of the truth of the Mosaical narrative is to be found in the well-known fact, that the system inaugurated by Joseph on this occasion has remained in force through every subsequent age, and amid all the vicissitudes of the nation. There has never been any right of property in land down to the present day. The population which has cultivated it has always been the slave of the government, and has paid to government-officers the portion of the year's produce, in pursuance of the agreement made originally between themselves and Joseph (Gen. xlvii.) At the present day the Turkish pasha is the owner of the soil, and orders what crops to be grown he thinks fit; the people who cultivate the ground being serfs, living in villages under a head or sheik, and bound to pay, in the fixed proportion of the crop, to the collector appointed by the pasha.



MONEY IN BAGS.
(From the Egyptian Sculptures.)

The whole circumstances are so interesting, from an historical point of view, that they are here repeated:—The famine increased in the land of Egypt, and the people of the land, during the first year, brought all their money to Joseph to buy food from his granaries. The second year, when they had no more money left, they came to Joseph saying, "Give us bread, for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth." Joseph said, "Give your cattle." They did this; and afterwards brought their flocks and herds. When these were gone they said, "We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord hath also our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands. Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh; and give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate." So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt, every man selling his possessions, a portion for the sacerdotal order being alone reserved.

135. *Why was Jacob with his family located in the land of Goshen?*

Because the Hebrews, being shepherds, were despised by the Egyptians, and therefore Joseph, by placing his brethren

at some distance from the capital, removed the chances of a continual dissension.

136. *Why did Jacob, in blessing the two sons of Joseph, give the preference to the younger?*

Because, with the gift of prophecy, he distinguished in Ephraim, the younger, his superior dignity, as destined to give kings to the ten tribes, and as the ancestor of Joshua, who, as a figure of Christ, should introduce the Israelites into the promised land.

137. The book of Genesis concludes with the account of the deaths of Jacob and Joseph—their embalmment, and their burial in coffins, after the manner of the Egyptians. The student of the Bible, and indeed of all ancient history, should not fail to visit those departments of the national collection in the British Museum which contain the Biblical antiquities. The Egyptian and the Assyrian rooms are full of the relics of that early period, and throw a wonderful light upon the records of the Pentateuch.

138. *Why is the second book of Moses called Exodus?*

Because it contains an account of *the going out* of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt to that of promise; the term *Exodus* being taken from the Greek word *Exodos*, signifying an exit or going out.

139. The Hebrews, according to their custom, call this book VEELLE SEMOSH; the words with which it commences signifying *these are the names*. Its history includes a period of 145 years, from the death of Joseph to the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness, B.C. 1490.

The slavery of the Israelites is described in the first chapters, and is supposed to have continued ninety years. The laws herein prescribed by God to his people, the sacrifices, tabernacle, etc., were all intended to prefigure the Christian dispensation. Moses himself was a type of Jesus Christ, who was rejected by the Synagogue and received by the Gentiles, as the Jewish legislator was abandoned by his mother and educated by the Egyptian princess; she delivers him back to his mother, and thus the Jews will at last acknowledge our Saviour.

140. *Why were the children of Israel held by the Egyptians in bondage?*

Because of the great increase of their numbers, joined to the well-known predictions of their future power.

141. The tyrant, "who knew not Joseph," began his reign about fifty-eight years after that patriarch's death: his name, according to some authorities, was Pharaoh Amenophis, according to others, Ramases Miamun.

B.C. 1491.—The Burning Bush.

142. *Why did Pharaoh command all the male children of the Hebrews to be cast into the river (Nile)?*

Because of the failure of his previous order to the midwives to destroy them.

143. This cruel edict appears to have been evaded to a very great extent; probably the Egyptians themselves abhorred and refused to execute its provisions.

144. *Why did the mother of Moses expose him in an ark of bullrushes?*

Because, notwithstanding the edict, she trusted that the providence of God would direct some kindly disposed person to protect him, although she herself was unable to do so.

145. The event justified her expectations. The king's daughter coming to the river's side discovers the child, and being struck with its beauty, adopts it for her own; while the anxious mother, by offering herself at the fortunate moment as its nurse, secures for it the maternal superintendence. Philo believes that the princess feigned him to be her own child.

From Heb. xi. 24, we learn that Moses "when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." But the adoption of Moses by a person of rank was of great importance: by this means he was educated "in all the learning of the Egyptians;" thus his natural gifts were fully developed, and he became in many respects better adapted for his future vocation.

146. *Why did Moses flee from Egypt to Midian?*

To avoid the penalty he had incurred by slaying the Egyptian whom he had seen striking one of his oppressed brethren.

147. This doubtful act became, by Divine Providence, a means of advancing him further in his preparation for his future career, by inducing him to escape into the Arabian desert. Here in the abode of the Midianitish prince Jethro, whose daughter Zipporah he married, and in the solitude of pastoral life, he was appointed to ripen gradually for his high calling before he was unexpectedly and suddenly sent back among his people, in order to achieve their deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

148. *Why did God appear to Moses in the burning bush?*

In order to impress upon him a due sense of the supernatural character of his future mission as the deliverer and lawgiver of the Jewish people.

149. His own constitutional diffidence and timidity rendered Moses *naturally* unfitted for so great an office; but the "meekest of men" is now invested with the

B.C. 1491.—Moses Before Pharaoh.

Divine commission, and he is told to rely not upon himself, but upon God. To his excuses, such as, "I am not eloquent," it is replied, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or the deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord?" (Exod. iv. 11.) He returns to Egypt accompanied by Aaron, his brother, and neither the dispirited state of the Israelites, nor the obstinate oppositions and threatenings of Pharaoh were now able to intimidate the man of God.

150. *Why was the rod of Moses changed into a serpent?*

To show him that God had invested him with miraculous powers, and to give him confidence in his intercourse with the Egyptians that he should have the Divine support.

151. *Why did Pharaoh refuse to let the Israelites depart from Egypt?*

Because he wished to show contempt for the mission of Moses and Aaron. Moreover, his people found the services of the Israelites profitable to them.

152. These latter were employed in all the menial offices of their time, but their chief work appears to have been the making of bricks. Previous to the first message of Moses, the Israelites had been furnished with the straw necessary, but now they were told to go and gather it for themselves. Nevertheless, the same amount of task-work was required of them, and thus their labours were doubled. The ungrateful character of the Jews here makes itself manifest, and they murmur against Moses as the cause of their cruel treatment.

153. *How were the Egyptian sorcerers enabled to counterfeit the miracle of Moses's rod when changed into a serpent?*

It is believed that they had real serpents in their hands, over which their skill as serpent-charmers enabled them so to operate that they made the animals to appear as rods, or as serpents, as suited them.

154. Eastern travellers corroborate this view. Indeed this, or some other similar trick, must needs have been practised. St. Augustin, and the ancient councils, say: "Whoever believes that anything can be made, or any creature changed, or transmuted into another species or appearance, except by the Creator Himself, is undoubtedly an infidel, and worse than a pagan." But God might have permitted a portion of miraculous power to be used by these sorcerers as one means of hardening Pharaoh's heart, which He intended to do as a punishment for his cruelties towards the Hebrews.

155. *Why did Pharaoh at last let the people of Israel depart from Egypt?*

Because of the severity of the plagues which the anger of God wrought upon him and upon his people.

B.C. 1491.—The Passover Instituted.

156. Of the ten plagues sent upon Egypt—the turning of the river into blood—the swarms of frogs—of lice—of flies—the murrain of cattle—the storm of hail—the locusts—the awful darkness—the boils—and, last, the slaying of the first-born, "from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat upon the throne, even unto the first-born of the servant that is behind the mill, and all the first-born of beasts," was the most terrible, and indeed was too terrible to admit of any more trifling.

Accordingly one thought alone now possessed the Egyptian nation, which was to get rid of the Israelites at any cost. Hence the willingness with which they stripped themselves of their jewels and ornaments in order to equip the hitherto despised Hebrews for their journey to the wilderness. That the latter "spoiled the Egyptians" effectually was due to the command of God communicated through Moses, and was intended as a poor compensation to the Hebrews for the many tedious years of robbery and extortion they had suffered at the hands of Pharaoh and his nation.

157. *Why was the passover instituted?*

To commemorate "the passing over" of the destroying angel when the tenth plague was inflicted upon the Egyptians.

158. The passover was thus observed: Each family was to take a lamb, or a kid, of one year old, not older, although it would do if over eight days old. This was to be killed and eaten with their loins girded and with staves in their hands, ready for their flight. Of the blood of this paschal lamb a portion was to be taken and sprinkled upon the lintel and two side-posts of the houses occupied by the Hebrews, that so the destroying angel, occupied in his terrible mission, seeing the blood-besprinkled doorways, might *pass over* them and spare the inmates.

It is needless to point out how obviously this institution was a type of the New Testament dispensation.

159. *Why, on their departure from Egypt, were the Israelites led by a miraculous pillar of a cloud and of fire?*

That they might have a continual reminder of the supernatural guidance under which they journeyed, and be made to depend rather upon its direction than upon their own plans.

160. This pillar of a cloud assumed different appearances as the exigencies of the Hebrews required. A little later it is stated to have been a cause of darkness and terror to the pursuing Egyptians, while it afforded a cheering light to the flying Jews.

161. *Why did Pharaoh and his army pursue them?*

Because they repented of their previous consent, regretted the loss of their multitude of slaves, their lent jewels, and were doubtless actuated by feelings of revenge at the slaughter of their first-born.

B.C. 1491.—The Israelites Enter the Desert.

162. *Why were the waters of the Red Sea divided?*

Because it pleased God to afford His people another proof of His power by miraculously opening for them a path through the midst of the waves, and in order to inflict the most signal punishment upon their oppressors, who were bent upon their pursuit and destruction.

163. God did not restrain the perverse will of the Egyptians, but suffered them to be guided by their blind passions, and to rush presumptuously into the bed of the sea. If the retiring of the waters had been owing to any natural cause, this astute people could not be unaware that at the stated time the ebbing would cease, and consequently that they would be overtaken by the waters. But these stood up "like a wall on their right hand and on their left," and the Egyptians were so infatuated as to suppose that the miracle would be continued for their protection.

164. *Why was the encampment of the Israelites at Marah so called?*

Because of the bitterness of the water—the word Marah signifying bitter.

165. Marah is now known by the name of Hawarah, and the water still retains its bitter taste. It is extremely unpleasant, and is the only water near the Red Sea, which the Arabs refuse to drink, except in cases of extreme necessity; and even camels, unless very thirsty, abstain from it. Dr. Olin states that it reminded him of a weak solution of Epsom salts.

The dissatisfaction of the Israelites at the well of Marah may be further illustrated by remembering the fact, that the Nile water had an extraordinary sweetness of quality, and which it retains to this day. The bitterness of this fountain gave cause to Moses to work another miracle. By the command of God he threw into the waters a tree, "which the Lord showed him," and they became pleasant to the taste.

166. *Why were the Israelites miraculously fed with quail and manna?*

Because, on their arrival at the wilderness of Sin, they experienced a scarcity of bread, and longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt.

167. They arrived at this point of their journeyings upon the fifteenth day of the second month, having left Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month (the day after the institution of the passover).

About eventide of the same day the quails were sent, and on the next morning the manna. These quails (*Coturnix dactylisonans*) are migratory birds.

They are often seen crossing the Mediterranean in prodigious flocks on their passage to and from Africa. Although swarms of them might settle around the tents of the Israelites without a miracle, yet nothing but the fiat of the Almighty could have sent them thither at an appointed time. Manna, according to Josephus, signifies, "What is it?" being compounded of *man-hu*. This the text makes evident, for it says, "It is manna, for they wist not what it was." The nature and taste of the manna of the wilderness is stated in Exod. xvi. 31, "It was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." This was the usual taste, but the Book of Wisdom (xvi. 20) states that it had the quality of taking various tastes—"Thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight and agreeing to every taste."—(Quoted from Oxford Bible, 1769.)

An omer of manna was set aside and preserved for a memorial, which preservation was itself a miracle, seeing that one of the characteristics of the manna was that it would not keep under ordinary circumstances (Exod. xvi. 20).

168. *Why did Moses strike the rock?*

Because the people being come to Rephidim, where there was no water, they murmured against him; Moses, upon an appeal to God, was commanded to smite the rock of Horeb, and the supply of water was immediately forthcoming.

169. *Why were the hands of Moses held up by Aaron and Hur while praying for the success of the Israelites against the Amalekites, who had fallen upon their rear?*

Because it was found that while they were raised in supplication to Heaven, the Israelites prevailed, and when they drooped from fatigue, the people began to give way before their enemies.

170. This was beyond doubt a most palpable type of the office of the future Messiah, and needs no special application. Every Christian is able to see and appreciate its aptitude.

171. *Why were the laws propounded from Mount Sinai amidst such terrifying circumstances?*

Because the character of the Israelites demanded such a mode of communication; or, in the language of St. Paul, 'because of the hardness of their hearts."

172. *Why did Moses, after the giving of the ten commandments, remain forty days on the Mount?*

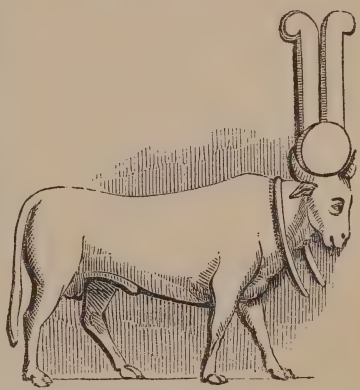
Because he had to receive from the mouth of God the various details of the Jewish law and ceremonial.

B.C. 1491.—The Golden Calf Worshipped.

173. *Why did the Israelites set up a golden calf and worship it as a god?*

Because, on account of the absence of Moses in the mount, they deemed that God had abandoned them, and they accordingly fell back upon the insensate idolatry of Egypt.

174. It is expressly said, in Joshua xxiv. 14, that while in Egypt the Hebrews had served the gods of that country; and had this information been wanting, the fact of their predilection for the idolatry of Egypt would be sufficiently apparent from their conduct on the present and various other occasions. That the idol to which they now turned aside was an Egyptian god, there can be very little doubt, and it is very generally agreed that this god was no other than Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, under whose form Osiris was worshipped.



APIS (the golden calf).

175. *Why did Moses, in his surprise and anger against the people, break the tables of the law which had been written by the finger of God?*

Because he considered that such a rebellious people were unworthy of so sacred a deposit.

176. The Jews keep the seventeenth day of the fourth month as a fast in memory of this event.

177. *Why were the artificers Bezaleel and Aholiab inspired to carry out the construction of the tabernacle and sacred vestments of the Jewish ceremonial?*

In order that the outward appurtenances of the true worship might in no way resemble those of the heathen peoples by whom the Israelites were surrounded, and thus be a stumbling block to them.

178. *Why is the third book of Moses called Leviticus?*

Because it treats of the offices, ministries, rites, and ceremonies of the priests and Levites under the Jewish law.

B.C. 1490.—The Tabernacle.

179. The Hebrews term it *VA-YIKRA*, "*and he* (the Lord) *called*," with which word it begins. In the Septuagint it is called *Levitikon*—from which the Latin word, *Leviticus*, of the Vulgate, is formed; and the word has been adopted in the authorized and other modern versions of the Scriptures. The first seven chapters explain the sacrifices, the next sixteen the offices and ordination of the priests and Levites. From the twenty-third chapter to the end the feasts are designated, and some regulations respecting vows are interspersed. These prescriptions were given during the month of Nisan, in the second year after the exit from Egypt, while the Hebrews remained near the foot of Mount Sinai.

180. *Why is the fourth book of Moses called Numbers?*

Because it begins and concludes with the numbering of the people.

The word "Numbers" is derived from the Greek (of the Septuagint) ΑΡΙΘΜΟΙ. Its Latin rendering in the Vulgate is *Numeri*, the English of which is "Numbers." The history comprised in this portion of the Pentateuch extends over about thirty-nine years, or from the second month of the second year after the departure from Egypt, until the beginning of the eleventh month of the fortieth year. In the first nine chapters various orders of people are described, and several laws are given or repeated. From the tenth to the thirty-third the marches and history of the Hebrews are related. Moses is considered to have composed this part of the Pentateuch, as well as the Deuteronomy, a little before his death, out of the memoirs which he had carefully preserved.

181. *Why was the fifth book of Moses called Deuteronomy?*

Because it is a repetition of the law previously given, the word signifying "a second law."

182. This title sufficiently characterizes the contents of the book, which comprises a series of addresses delivered by Moses to the assembled Israelites, when he knew that he was shortly to be taken from among them, and when they were upon the eve of departure for the promised land. He exhorts the Israelites, in the most pathetic manner, to be faithful to the Lord, adding the strongest threats and promises to enforce their compliance; and having appointed Joshua to succeed him, and given the book of Deuteronomy to be kept with care, he blesses the people for the last time, goes up to the top of Mount Pisgah, and dies. There can be no difficulty about the authenticity of this book from the fact of Moses' death being described therein, since he himself might have inserted it by Divine inspiration, or it might have been added afterwards by its transcriber, Ezra.

183. *Why is a general acquaintance with the form and character of the Jewish Tabernacle desirable on the part of every Christian?*

Because, without it, it is impossible to understand the other portions of the Old and New Testaments, or to appreciate the thousand allusions thereto scattered over the whole of sacred literature.

B.C. 1490.—The Tabernacle.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TABERNACLE OF THE WILDERNESS.

184. *The Outer Court of the Tabernacle* was an enclosure fifty-eight yards long, by about half that breadth. The height of the enclosing fence was about nine feet; it was made of fine twisted linen curtains, supported by sixty pillars or rods of brass, fixed in sockets of the same metal, twenty on each side and ten at the ends. The four centre rods at each end sustained a curtain, the ends of which looped up and formed the entrance or doorway. Entering this doorway from the east, the Tabernacle itself stood immediately before the spectator, close to the western end of the court. In the intermediate space stood the altar of burnt-offering, and a little to the left the brazen laver.

The Altar of Burnt-offering, made of wood covered with brass plates, was about nine feet square and five feet high. It was half filled with earth. The upper part of the eastern side was grilled, or grated, to allow the ashes of the fire to be removed. The top was a loose grating, on which was placed the wood for the fire and the offerings. At each corner was a horn; and two sides of the altar had rings, with poles, that were fixed into them, to admit of the altar being carried. Flesh-hooks, ladles, and other instruments of brass appertained to the altar, for use during the sacrifice. The priest offering the sacrifice approached to it on a slanting platform, made of earth, raised to the height of a large step.

The Laver stood to the left of the altar, and was a large bowl or basin, composed of brass, standing upon a pedestal of the same metal. It was kept very bright, and it served the purpose of cleansing the hands and feet of the priests before and during the sacrifices.

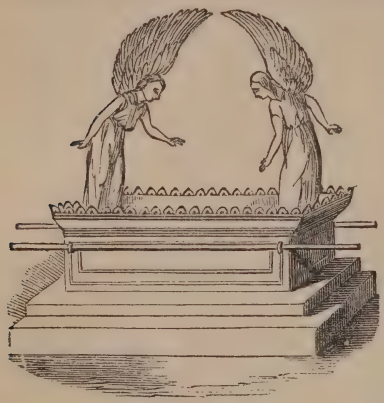
The Tabernacle itself was a building of an oblong square form, fifty-five feet long by eighteen feet in width and height, composed of boards of the imperishable Shittim wood: twenty on the north and south sides, with eight on the west end, the east end being left free for the entrance. These boards were entirely covered with plates of gold, and were set up by being fixed into sockets of solid silver. The boards were kept together by five bars of the same wood covered with gold, running through rings fixed to the boards in three rows. The east end was closed by a veil, supported by five pillars of the same wood overlaid with gold, each standing in a socket of brass. The interior was divided into two compartments by another veil, eighteen feet distant from the west end, and supported by four pillars, as the outer veil was by five. The inner space thus enclosed was the "Holy of Holies."

The Eastern or Outer Compartment, which stood before the Holy of Holies, was draped entirely by rich hangings of fine linen, wrought with cherubim and branches of plants in gold, purple, crimson, and blue. The first object that met the eye was the *Altar of Incense*, about three feet high, and one foot six inches square. It had a golden crown at the top, and was covered entirely with pure gold, and from this circumstance was called the Golden Altar. It was carried by means of two golden rods passing through rings in its sides, and it was used for burning upon it the people's offering of perpetual incense. It had horns at the four corners, which in particular solemnities were touched with the blood of the victims. On its left stood the

Seven-branched Golden Candlestick, composed of a stem and six branches, holding seven lamps, which were kept continually burning. In the right was placed the

B.C. 1490.—Vestments of the High Priest.

Table of Shew-bread, made from Shittim wood, covered with gold; it was carved and crowned with gold in the same manner as the altar of incense. The loaves placed upon this table were twelve in number, and they remained lying upon it the whole week, being renewed previously to each Sabbath. They were kept in their places by a golden frame, and three small golden tubes were placed between each loaf to prevent mouldiness. The loaves that were removed were to be eaten by the priests alone. This table also held various small cups and bowls of gold, used in the offering of libations. Into this part of the Tabernacle none but priests might enter.



ARK OF THE COVENANT.

The Holy of Holies was draped in a similar manner to the ante-chamber, and contained the Ark of the Covenant.

The Ark was a coffer of imperishable wood, covered entirely with plates of gold, about three feet nine inches long, by two feet three inches in height and width. Within it were kept the tables of the law, and beside them the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that had budded. Within a golden crown, surrounding the top, was placed the mercy-seat. This was a plate of gold, serving as a kind of cover to the Ark. On either side of the mercy-seat stood two cherubim, bending down in adoration, with their wings extended over it. Here the Divine presence rested, and alone lighted the sanctuary. Into this place none but the high priest alone might enter upon one day in the year, the day of solemn atonement.

EGYPTIAN (imitations of the Hebrew) CHERUBIM.

The whole frame of the Tabernacle was enclosed by a tent of goat's hair, and two other coverings, one of ram's skins dyed red, and the third of fine furs.

185. *Why were such minute directions given respecting the vestments of the high priest?*

Because his whole appearance and functions had a double, that is, a present and a future, meaning.

B.C. 1490.—Vestments of the High Priest.

186. The priests were chosen from among men to be more holy, of whicl their washing was a sign, as their splendid robes were to remind them of thei dignity and authority over the people. The high priest had seven special ornaments:—1, white linen, to denote purity; 2, a curious girdle, intimating that he must use discretion in all things; 3, the long tunic of various colours, with bells, etc. signifying heavenly conversation upon earth, unity and harmony in faith and morals; 4, an ephod, with two precious stones on the shoulders, teaching him to support the failings of the multitude; 5, the rational, with its ornaments, shows that the high priest should teach sound and profitable doctrine; 6, the mitre indicates that all his actions should be referred to God above; and, lastly, the plate of gold denotes that he should always have God in view. (*St. Jerome. Epis ad Faviol.*)

ANOINTING THE HIGH PRIEST.

187. *How were the Hebrews enabled in the wilderne s to procure the large amount of gold and other precious materials required in the construction and ornamentation of the Tabernacle and its appendages?*

EAR-RINGS AND HEAD-GEAR OF THE EGYPTIANS.

Upon their exodus from Egypt they were in possession of considerable wealth, the result partly of their own hoarding, and partly by their having, in pursuance of the Divine direction, borrowed largely of their enslavers.

188. That this "borrowing" produced a vast sum is evident from (Exod. xii. 36) the passage which says, "And they spoiled the Egyptians." This store of gold and costly jewels consisted mainly in articles of personal attire and decoration, such as rings, pins, brooches, etc. When the sacred vessels and offices had to be constructed these were willingly offered.

B.C. 1489.—The Scape Goat—Pentecost.

189. *Why did Nadab and Abihu perish by fire from God?*

Because, at the very outset of the establishment of the law, they violated its precepts by offering strange fire before the Lord.

190. The commandment was that the fire should be taken from the *perpetual fire on the altar*. Some commentators infer that this punishment was all they received—that their mortal part being punished, they saved their souls. Hence they were said to have died before the Lord, and were buried honourably.

MITRES OF THE PRIESTS.

191. *Why were the laws concerning the cure of leprosy instituted?*

Because of the significancy of that disease, as a type of sin in general.

192. Doubtless there were many grievous disorders which equally demanded a cure. The singling out of this particular one sufficiently denotes the object of the law. The leper was to present himself before the priest; the priest was to lead him forth from the camp and examine him; was to take two birds, alive and clean, cedar-wood, scarlet and hyssop. One of the birds was to be killed in an earthen vessel, over running water, into which the living bird, the cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet were to be dipped, and the leper was to be sprinkled seven times: he was thus cleansed. The living bird was next let loose; the leper was commanded to wash his clothes, to shave off all his hair, and return to the camp, but to remain outside his tent seven days. After once more washing his clothes and completely shaving off his hair, he had to make an offering, according to his means, of lambs and oil; and with a few more ceremonies the rite was ended.

193. *Why was the scape-goat sent into the wilderness?*

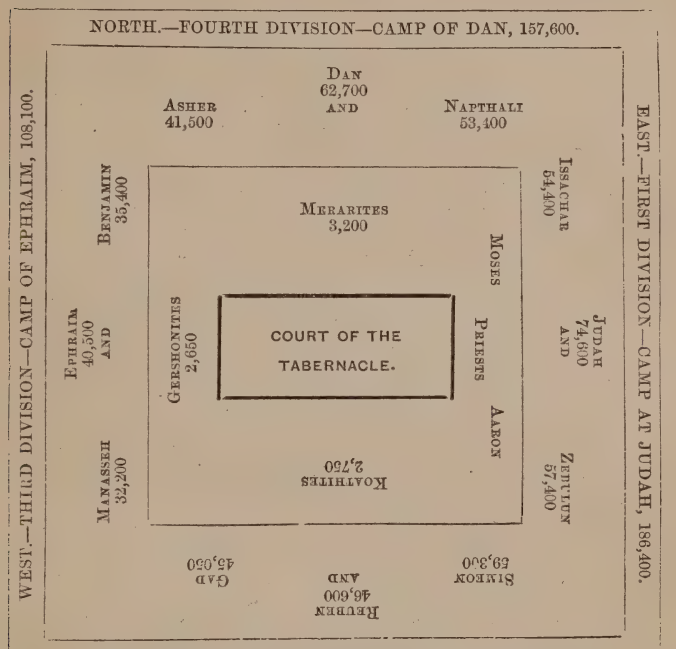
Because by that means the people had presented to them a most striking image of the office of the Messiah as the pardoner and reconciler of mankind with God.

194. *Why was the feast of Pentecost so called?*

Because it was observed on the fiftieth day from the first day of passover, like which it was a commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt.

195. Pentecost is derived from *pentecoste*, a Greek word signifying the fiftieth; Hebrew title was the "feast of weeks."

B.C. 1489.—The Camp of the Desert.



GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE CAMP OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE DESERT.

196. *Why were the various ceremonies of ablution instituted?*

Because, apart from the sanitary use of water, it was the most apt and palpable type of that inward purity which was essential to both priests and people in their approaches to the Divine presence.

197. The ablutions, though various, mainly consisted washing the whole or part of the body before sacrificing or even before entering their houses. Ablutions appear to be as old as any ceremonies of which we have any record. Moses enjoined them, the heathens adopted them, and Mahomet and his followers have continued them. The ancient Christians had their abutions before communion, which the Roman Catholic Church still retains as a part of the service of the mass.

The Syrian Copts, etc., have their solemn washings on Good Friday, as have also the Russians, etc.

198. *Why were the Israelites forbidden to eat blood?*

Because, on account of the sins which they daily committed, and which could never be fully expiated by offerings on the altar, they owed to God all the blood of the beasts which they slaughtered, and were to dedicate it to Him as an atonement (Levit. xvii. 11—14).

199. Those commentators who seek for prudential reasons in the Mosaical prohibitions, argue thus:—It was a practice among many of the Pagan nations of Asia to drink the blood of the victims as a part of the sacrificed offerings to their idols. It was for this reason, and to draw a line of distinction between them and their idolatrous neighbours, that the Jews received this prohibition, and not only the Jews, but the stranger within their gates were included in this law. In later times, when the pagan Asiatics would force the Christians to apostatize, they commanded them to drink blood; in the same way that by the Romans they were commanded to burn incense to the idols.

200. *Why was one tribe set apart for the service of the Tabernacle?*

In order that, being separated from secular affairs and living by the Tabernacle, they might give an exclusive and undivided attention to it.

201. The tribe of Levi was selected for this purpose. It had no share in the division of the promised land, but was supported in various ways by the whole of the people, principally by the tithe or tenth-part offering which was mpulsory upon the Hebrews, and formed part of their code. In return the Levites had to be about the person of the chief priest, to "minister unto him," to "do the service of the tabernacle," to "keep all the instruments of the same," to erect it, watch it, and convey it from place to place.

COOKING.
(From the Egyptian Monuments.)

202. *Why were the Israelites forbidden to eat swine's flesh?*

The reason of this prohibition may be found not only in the filthy habits and appearance of the animal, but also in the tendency of its flesh

to engender diseases in eastern climates, particularly those affecting the skin, as the leprosy.

203. Swine have very widely been objects of aversion and avoidance. The Egyptians, Indians, Phœnicians, Arabians, and others, shrunk from them in dislike. These nations in all probability copied the prohibition contained in the Jewish law. Swine, as prolific animals, were, on the other hand, offered to Venus by the pagans. Among some of these, swine's flesh was eaten as a part of religious worship. The passage, Isaiah lxv. 3, 4—"a people, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels"—is thus explained.

204. *Why were the tables with the shew-bread set up in the tabernacle and afterwards in the temple?*

As a memorial of the twelve tribes, which the twelve loaves or cakes represented before the presence of Jehovah.

205. The term shew-bread in the Hebrew signifies "bread of the presence," or the face. They were made of the finest flour, without leaven, and were with salt and frankincense to be offered every week to Jehovah: they lay in two heaps, one above the other. The cakes were renewed every Sabbath, when the former were removed and eaten by the priests. In cases of necessity others partook of the shew-bread, provided they were Levitically clean. The table was of gold. There is a representation of this and the loaves upon the arch of Titus at Rome.

206. *What were the wave-offerings mentioned in Leviticus* ix. 21?

They were offerings of the first-fruits, and were intended to show that all the blessings of Providence, of whatever kind, merited thankfulness on the part of man?

207. The term is derived from a Hebrew root which signifies "to lift up." They were oblations connected especially with thank-offerings, which before and after the slaughter of the victim were moved up and down, as well as to and fro, probably in order to show that the sacrifice was made to the Lord of all the four parts of, that is, the entire world, to whom thus a solemn homage was paid. The word *wave* is used in Exod. xxix. 24, where the Levites are required to be waved as a wave-offering, the intention being probably indicated by suitable movements o the hands.

208. *Why was the "Feast of Tabernacles" instituted?*

To commemorate the sojourn in the desert, as well as to express the gratitude of the Jews towards Jehovah for giving them the rich fruits of the earth.

209. As the passover was the great spring festival, so this was to be the closing celebration of the year. It was to commence on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Tisri), and to last seven days the first day, and the following eighth day

were to be Sabbaths; seven days were offerings to be made, "And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook: ye shall dwell in booths seven days, and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God when ye have gathered the fruit of the land; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." (Lev. xxiii. 40—43.)

210. *What were the Nazarites?*

They were a kind of devotees, or persons who had "vowed to the Lord" to perform peculiar devotions, or to abstain from certain permitted indulgences, either thereby to obtain some particular favour from Heaven, or to pay the penalty for some fault.

211. The law, as stated in Num. vi., is put forth rather as regulating an established than as instituting a new thing. In verse 2 of this chapter we read, "When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow the vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the Lord; he shall ——" and so forth. The word Nazarite is formed from *nazar*, "to separate," and means "the separated one." The term means also to distinguish one's self by a wonderful thing. There were Nazarites for life, like Samson and St. John the Baptist, and others for a limited time, like St. Paul. Their abstinence from wine, etc., lasted generally for a month, and was to be performed at Jerusalem.

212. *Why were the seventy Elders appointed?*

Because the people having come to Taberah, where their murmurings were punished by fire from heaven, and continuing their complaints against Moses, he besought the Lord to relieve him of the burthen of their management, or to appoint him some associates in the government of Israel.

213. This appointing of the seventy elders was the first institution of the council or senate called the *Sanhedrim*. We read in Exod. xxiv. 9, of seventy elders who were with Moses in the mount, and who are again spoken of as "nobles of Israel." The present institution, therefore, consisted probably in nothing more than giving new authorities and powers to a body already existing.

214. *Why did Korah, Nathan, and Abiram rebel against Moses?*

Because they were jealous of the extraordinary powers with which God had invested his servant.

215. The Sabbath-breaker had just been stoned to death. Korah and his companions appear to have seized upon this circumstance as one likely to excite murmurs among the people on account of its severity, and probably reckoned upon receiving the adhesion of a majority, or at least of a sufficiently strong party from the con-

B.C. 1471.—The Brazen Serpent.

gregation to their side. The event did not answer their expectations. Besides the leaders and their families, only the two hundred and fifty, who had joined themselves with them, at first arrayed themselves against the constituted authority. Their refusal to attend the citation of Moses, their insulting accusations, and their awful punishment follow close upon each other, and are narrated in Num. xvi.

216. *Why did Aaron's rod burst into blossom?*

As a testimony that he and his family of all the people of Israel had been chosen for the exclusive office of the priesthood.

217. After the fearful punishment of Korah and his companions, the people continuing to murmur as before, a plague was sent amongst them which cut off fourteen thousand seven hundred souls. Moses was then directed to demand from the heads of the eleven tribes a rod each, with the name of the tribe written upon it, Aaron's rod, with his name upon it, representing the tribe of Levi. The twelve rods were then laid up in the tabernacle of the testimony. "On the morrow," in the words of the Scripture narrative, "Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron, for the house of Levi, had budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds."

This miracle appears at length to have convinced the Israelites of the unalterable choice which God had made in favour of Aaron and his family, if it did not silence their murmurings.

218. *Why was Moses forbidden to enter into the promised land?*

Because at Meribah he sinned against God in neglecting to sanctify Him before the congregation, whom in his impatience he called rebels, and, contrary to God's command, struck the rock twice instead of speaking to it.

219. It would appear that having been admitted to an extraordinary familiarity with God, a very great degree of perfection was required of Moses in return. But if, says an old writer, God had not found fault with his servant on this occasion, we could scarcely have found any reason to condemn him.

220. *Why was the brazen serpent set up in the wilderness?*

Because the people, murmuring on account of the difficulties of their passage through the wilderness, were plagued with fiery serpents whereof many died. Upon their repentance God commanded that a brazen serpent should be made and set upon a pole that as many as looked upon it might live.

221. The obvious typical meaning of this, as applied to the sufferings of Christ, is referred to in John iii. 14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up."

B.C. 1451.—Death of Moses.

222. *Why did the Israelites now begin to take possession of the land of Canaan?*

Because all those who had mutinied against God at Kadesh-barnea being dead, against whom "He swore in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest," there remained no obstacle to the accomplishment of the promise.

223. Accordingly the Israelites passed over Zared and came to the borders of Moab at Ar, and at length arrived at Bamoth, a valley in the country of the Moabites, and pitched at Mount Pisgah. Their wars with the inhabitants now commenced. Sihon, king of the Amorites, refusing them a passage, is attacked and slain, and his country taken possession of. Og, king of Basan, coming out against Israel is destroyed with all his army and his country possessed. After these victories the Israelites set forward and encamp in the plains of Moab.

224. *Why was Balaam sent for by Balak king of Moab?*

Because being in dread of the Israelites he imagined that Balaam, as a soothsayer of great repute, had power by his enchantments to paralyze their movements and stop their progress towards the land of their inheritance.

225. *Why was the name of Balaam, who did not curse but bless the people of Israel, held in such detestation?*

Because, although withheld by the hand of God from cursing the people, he showed no unwillingness to do so; and afterwards gave such advice to Balak as led to the ruin of many of the Israelites, and became a perpetual stumbling-block to them.

226. By his advice the women of Moab and Midian are used by Balak to turn the people to idolatry. A disorder ensues; whereupon God commands Moses to take all the ringleaders and to hang them. Then a plague is sent, of which 23,000 men die in one day.

227. *Why did Moses, before his death, command the "stones of memorial" to be set up in the midst of Jordan?*

That the people might have a continual reminder of their covenant with God when in possession of the promised land.

228. This was nearly the last act of Moses. He shortly afterwards, by command of God, ascends Mount Nebo and dies.

229. *Why was the burial-place of Moses concealed from human knowledge?*

Because, most probably, the great merits and fame of the

Hebrew leader and lawgiver would have led the surrounding nations to elevate him into a deity, and to establish an idolatrous temple over his tomb.

230. Judging from analogy, there was danger that the Jews themselves would in time come to pay divine honours to their great lawgiver. Some Jewish writers have held that Moses did not die, but was snatched away in a cloud like Enoch, and afterwards Elijah; but the sacred text directly says "he died," and that God himself buried him in the valley. Whether this burial was by the hands of angels, or in some other mysterious manner, matters very little.

231. *Why had Moses no successor, strictly speaking?*

Because according to the original constitution of the Hebrew nation God himself was their ruler, the people his subjects, and Moses the mediator, or internuncio between them. But the title most appropriate to Moses, and most descriptive of the part he had to sustain, was that of *legislator of the Israelites and their deliverer from the Egyptians.* When the Israelites were no longer oppressed with Egyptian bondage, and those laws were already introduced which were immediately necessary for the well-being of the people, his functions ceased.

232. It was also on this account, viz., that the employments in which he was especially engaged were of a peculiar nature, and having been accomplished while he was living, ceased when he was dead, that the council of seventy elders, who were assigned him to assist in the discharge of his oppressive duties, no longer had an existence after his decease.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOOKS OF JOSHUA, JUDGES, AND RUTH.

233. *Why was the book of Joshua so called?*

Because it contains the history of what passed under the leadership of Joshua, and was written by him.

234. The name of Joshua is equivalent to the Greek, Latin, and English name of *Jesus*, signifying a *Saviour*, or "the Lord saves." This great leader was formerly named Osea, or Hoshea, "saving." This appellation was changed by Moses (Num. xiii.) to Joshua, as prophetical and significant of the office he was to undertake in saving the people, or leading them from the desert into the promised land. That Joshua

was a type of Christ is manifest. The history of the book of Joshua sets before us the passage of the Jordan, the conquest of Canaan, and the distribution of the country. The length of time embraced therein is about fourteen years.

235. *Why is the River Jordan so called?*

Because it is a very rapid river, the word Jordan being derived from *jord*, or *irod*, "it flows," or "comes down."

236. *Why did Rahab the harlot harbour the spies sent by Joshua?*

Because, by Divine illumination, she knew them to be the messengers of the people to whom God had allotted the whole country.

237. St. Paul, in Heb. xi. 31, says: "Through faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies in peace." The term used here for harlot may also mean innkeeper; but whatever she might have been at the time of these occurrences, she was probably awakened to a new life by the account of the miracles which God had wrought in favour of his people.

238. *Why were the waters of the Jordan divided for them as the Israelites passed over Jordan?*

Because, in addition to the dry passage thus miraculously afforded them, they might be reminded of the passage over the Red Sea after their deliverance from Egypt.

239. *Why did the Israelites pass the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month?*

Because that day being the beginning of the passover, or the day when the paschal-lamb—which was to be eaten on the fourteenth day—was to be selected from the flock, the occasion might suggest to them their ultimate passage from the old to the new dispensation through the Messiah, the Lamb of God.

240. *Why did the manna cease to fall upon the day after the completion of the passover?*

Because the Israelites had now reached the promised land, whose natural supplies were abundant, and they no longer needed the supernaturally-provided food.

241. As a proof of this abundance the text, Josh. v. ii., says: "And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the self-same day." That is, there was such a plenty, that they had three sorts of corn to choose from.

B.C. 1450.—Joshua Commands the Sun to Stand Still.

242. *Why did an angelic messenger appear at this juncture to Joshua?*

To assure him of victory over the enemies of God and his people.

243. *Why did the walls of Jericho fall down when the ark of the Lord was carried in a solemn procession around them?*

Because it was the design of God to show the nations that the Israelites fought by his direction, and conquered by his blessing, rather than by their own prowess.

244. *Why did the Israelites retreat before Ai?*

Because Achan, a man of the tribe of Judah, had sacrilegiously hidden some portion of the spoils which God had commanded to be destroyed.

245. The cupidity of this man, who, for a paltry personal end, had brought defeat and disgrace upon the whole people, was soon detected and punished. Being discovered by means of lots cast, he and his family with their cattle were stoned to death, their goods burned, and a heap set up over their remains as a memorial of reproach.

246. *Why were the Gibeonites exempted from the general extirpation of the Canaanitish tribes?*

Because, having by a stratagem induced Joshua to spare them, the oath which he swore to them to preserve them was allowed to be respected.

247. But the Gibeonites, who had represented themselves through their deputation as strangers living at a great distance, and so deceived the Jewish leader, upon the people's murmurs, were subjected to the performance of the most menial offices, and remained among the Jews for many ages, "mere hewers of wood and drawers of water."

248. *Why did Joshua command the sun to stand still?*

That the confederate kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, might not escape under cover of night, and so prolong a contest which he was anxious to conclude.

249. These kings, having heard that the Gibeonites had made peace with Joshua, banded together and laid siege to their city; but Joshua attacked them, raised the siege and routed them, chasing their army as far as Azekah. The Lord assisted his people by means of a terrific storm, which broke over the heads of the retreating hordes, killing more thereby than by the swords of Israelites. Utterly defeated, the

five kings hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah: from thence they were brought out and hanged. The command, "*Sun, stand thou still,*" etc., was used in accommodation to the astronomical opinions that then prevailed.

250. *What was the object of the observance of the Sabbatical year which dated from this time?*

It was a charitable provision for the poor, as explained by the passage in Exod. xxiii. 10, 11: "And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather the fruits thereof. But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and be still: that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner shalt thou deal with thy vineyard and with thy oliveyard."

251. *Why was Joshua now directed to divide all the land on the west of Jordan among the nine tribes and a half as yet unprovided for?*

Because, growing old, it was desirable that this should be done, lest his death might leave the affair unfinished, and raise a cause of dispute.

252. *Why was the book of Judges so called?*

Because it contains the history of what passed under the government of the Judges who ruled Israel before they had kings.

253. The writer of it, according to the more general opinion, was the prophet Samuel. Some are of opinion that the Judges might have each left records of their respective administrations, which might have been put in order by Samuel. These Judges were fifteen in number, and their presidency over Israel extended from the death of Joshua to the accession of Saul, a period of 450 years. Their office is not exactly similar in all cases, the word judges not quite expressing the kind of leadership exercised by all of them. They were exceptional rather than regular rulers, and were severally adapted to the occasions which called them forth.

254. *Why was the book of Judges written?*

The author's intention is to show how, after the death of Joshua and until the settlement of the kingdom under Saul and his successors, the people, occasionally governed by judges, experienced various reverses, and encountered a variety of fortunes.

255. The moral purpose is to exhibit the people in their repeated falls and restorations—to proclaim the inevitable consequence of their proneness to idolatry,

the punishment that quickly followed their sin, and the ever recurring mercy that awaited their repentance.

256. *Why did the leaders of Israel cut off the thumbs and great toes of the king Adoni-bezek?*

Because of his cruelty to others, he having previously, according to his own confession, cut off the toes and thumbs of seventy kings or chiefs, whom he made to minister about his table.

257. The chapters following this account are occupied with a narration of the acts of a generation of men which forgot God, and mingled themselves with the Canaanites by marriage and the worship of their idols. The Israelitish history, until the judgeship of Eli, may be thus epitomized:

By the idolatry of Micah and the children of Dan, and the sin of the Benjamites, God, being greatly displeased, raised up against them Cushan, king of Mesopotamia, who conquers them and holds them in bondage eight years. To deliver them, Othniel, the son of Kenaz and son-in-law to Joshua, is sent as a judge and an avenger. He defeats Cushan, delivers the Israelites, and restores a peace which lasts forty years.

After Othniel, the people again relapsing, are given over into the hands of Eglon, king of Moab, who, joining with the Ammonites and the Amalekites, overthrows the Israelites, and takes Jericho. Under this oppression they suffer eighteen years.

Another deliverer is now found in Ehud, the son of Gera, who kills Eglon, routs his army, and establishes a peace for Israel of forty years more. After Ehud, for their sins the people are given up to the power of Jabin, king of Canaan, under whom they groan for twenty years.

Deborah the wife of Lapidoth, a prophetess, now guides Israel. Conjointly with her, Barak, of the tribe of Naphtali, a valiant captain, rise against and defeat the forces of Jabin, whose lieutenant, Sisera, fleeing for his life, is killed by Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. The land thereupon rests for another forty years.

A lapse into idolatry, and a thraldom of seven years follow. They cry to God for help, and are reproved by a prophet. Then Gideon, the son of Joash of Manasseh, is by an angel of God sent to deliver them. Rejecting the assistance of a great army, he takes with him against the vast host of the Midianites only 300 men. Being miraculously assisted, he defeats them, and slays their two kings; after which great victories the Israelites offer to settle the kingdom upon him and his posterity; he refuses, but accepts a present of gold, which he makes into an ephod. This proves an occasion of idolatry to the fickle Jews. The land enjoys rest for forty years. Gideon dies, and the people again relapse. Abimelech, a son of Gideon, aims at the power declined by his father, and after various cruelties (recorded in Judges ix.), succeeded in making himself a sort of king. After a turbulent reign of three years he kills himself, and Tola, the son of Puah, judges Israel twenty-three years. After him Jair the Gileadite succeeds, and rules twenty-two years.

B.C. 1155.—Judgeship of Samson.

Relapsing again into idolatry, the Philistines and Ammonites are brought upon them, and the Israelites are held in a thraldom of eighteen years. Upon their repentance they obtain mercy, and Jephthah the Gileadite is raised to succour them; he subdues their enemies, and makes a rash vow, to offer up in sacrifice to God the first thing that meets him as he returns to his home. His daughter is this first thing, and he "did with her according to the vow which he had vowed." He judges Israel seven years, and is succeeded by Ibzan the Bethlemite, who again, after seven years, is succeeded by Elon the Zebulonite, who judges the people ten years. The immediate predecessor of Eli the high priest is Abdon the Ephraimite, who rules eight years.

258. *Why was Samson raised up as a judge?*

Because the circumstances of the people required a leader of his peculiar character.

259. The Israelites, under the presidency of Eli the high priest, had, for their treasons against God, been suffered to fall under the power of the Philistines. This sixth thraldom began seven months after Eli's entering upon the government, and continued forty years, that is, until seven months after his death, when the ark, captured by them, was brought back again.

Samson was the son of Manoah, of the tribe of Dan, and born A.M. 2848. His mother had been long barren, but an angel appearing to her assured her of her acceptance with God; of the birth of a son; bade her prepare herself by abstinence for the event; directed that the child should be dedicated to God from his birth, as a Nazarite, *upon whose head no razor was to come.* According to the prophecy of the angel, he was born on the following year, and his election to great achievements began to show itself by the acts of preternatural strength which he performed; as, for instance, the slaying of a young lion at Timnath without any other weapons than his hands.

260. *Why did Samson marry a Philistine woman?*

Because moved to do so by Divine Providence, as one of the means towards the deliverance of Israel.

261. The Jews say that this woman was a convert to the true faith, in which case there would be no difficulty in his marrying her, as afterwards Salmon, the father of Booz, did Rachab. (See Matt. i. 5.) But we are put in possession of the real motive of Samson's choice by the passage (Judges, xiv. 4), "But his father and mother knew not that it was of the Lord that he sought an occasion against the Philistines; for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel."

262. *Why did Samson propose a riddle to the Philistines?*

Because, knowing beforehand that they would neither guess its meaning nor yield the forfeit agreed upon, he would have a just occasion to make a breach with the Philistines.

263. Such obscure and ingenious questions were much liked in the East. In 1 Kings x. 1., we have an instance where the Queen of Sheba, hearing of the fam-

of king Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, came to "prove him with hard questions." The Egyptians concealed the mysteries of their religion, and Pythagoras his choicest maxims, under them. The Greeks proposed them at feasts, determining some reward or punishment to those who succeeded or failed to explain them. The Philistines took a method of their own for discovering the clue to the proposed riddle. Coming to Samson's wife, they said, "Entice thy husband that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire." Thus threatened, she soon extracts the secret from him, and imparts it to the Philistines. The anger of Samson, and the punishment he inflicts upon the foes of Israel, immediately follow. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Askelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil."

264. *Why did Samson set fire to the Philistines' corn?*

Because, going down to visit his wife about the harvest time he found that she had been given in marriage by them to another man.

265. He accordingly catches 300 foxes, and tying firebrands to their tails, turns them all into the cornfields, vineyards, and olive-gardens of his enemies, and sets them in a blaze. The Philistines thereupon take Samson's wife and father-in-law, and burn them. Samson, in return, slays a great multitude of them, and sits down upon the rock Etam.

266. *Why did three thousand of the Jews deliver Samson into the hands of the Philistines?*

Because, as in the case of Moses in Egypt, they were less anxious to be delivered from the slavery of their enemies, than to be enfranchized by a prophet of God.

267. The event, however, proved of no advantage to Samson's enemies. Strengthened by Divine Providence, he rises in his might, and with a paltry weapon —the jawbone of an ass—slays a thousand Philistines. God's warrant for this act was plainly enough manifested in the miracle that followed. Being "sore athirst," and finding no ready means of refreshment, he calls upon the Lord, who answers him by causing a hollow place to appear in the jawbone, with which he had pursued his enemies, out of which water came; and when he had drank thereof his spirit came again, and he revived. And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

268. *Why did Samson carry away the gates of Gaza?*

Because, being in that city, the Philistines endeavoured to make him their captive; which he thus prevented, carrying off the doors of the gate, and the two posts.

269. It was now that Eli presided over Israel. A general depravity had fallen upon the whole people. Samson also was a sharer in this forgetfulness of God and

B.C. 1117.—Death of Samson.

his laws. He appears to have gone up and down doing his own will and pleasure, not indeed forfeiting his claim to the office of a leader and a judge of Israel, but yet staining his character with vices, and associating with the open doers of evil.

No sooner is he freed from the toils of the Philistines at Gaza, than he forms an illicit connection with a woman in the valley of Sorek. Delilah, the woman in question, was a mere tool of the Philistines. In his folly and blind attachment to her he loses his liberty, and, by revealing to her the secret of his strength, he precipitates the catastrophe which ends his life.

270. *What were the circumstances of Samson's death?*

Having been captured by the Philistines and deprived of his eye-sight, he was made to grind in a mill, as a sort of retributive jest upon his great strength. Finally, being about to celebrate a great feast, in honour of their idol Dagon, they sent for Samson, to make them sport.

271. His particular mission, as a scourge to the Philistines, has now another opportunity to show itself. His hair, the seat of his strength, has grown again. He feels his powers renewed. By the Divine permission he contemplates a catastrophe, which, if it envelopes the principal actor, will, at least, send confusion and destruction among his enemies. He asks to be led to the two main pillars that support the corner of the house in which the princes of the Philistines and a vast multitude of their people are assembled; then, with one last effort and a fervent prayer to the God of Israel, he grasps the pillars. They give way—the house falls, and Samson "kills more men at his death than he had done in all his lifetime besides."

272. *Why is the book of Ruth so called?*

From the name of the ancestress of David, whose history is therein recorded.

273. Boaz, whom Ruth married, was great-grandfather to David. Ruth had been a Gentile, but was converted to the true faith.

274. *Why is the book of Ruth, being the record of but one family as it were, placed thus prominently in the Bible?*

Because, by marrying Boaz, Ruth became a progenitor of Jesus Christ, who, according to the flesh, sprung from the family of David.

275. *Who was the author of the book of Ruth?*

The majority of commentators attribute its authorship to the prophet Samuel.

276. The history contained in the Book of Ruth will not be intelligible unless the law mentioned in Deut. xxv. 5, and in Matt. xxii. 24, be remembered. By this law it was provided, that if a man died, having no son, his brother was directed to

B.C. 1116.—History of Ruth.

marry his widow, and raise up issue to him. Ruth, as the childless widow of Mahlon, was justified, according to the Jewish law, in seeking to supply the place of her deceased spouse, by a marriage with his nearest of kin. Following the instructions of her mother-in-law, Naomi, she places herself in the path of Boaz. That she does this from a good and virtuous motive is declared by the sacred writer in these words (Ruth iii. 10)—"Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter; for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich."

The history contained in the book is as follows:—A certain man of the tribe of Judah, and of the city of Bethlehem, named Elimelech, on account of the famine which prevailed at that time—it was during the judgeship of Gideon—in his own land, emigrated to the country of Moab; he, his wife Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. After a time Elimelech died, and his two sons, having taken wives from among the Moabites, died also. Naomi, the widow—plenty and peace being restored to her native land—sets out to return to it. Her widowed daughters-in-law proceed with her to the frontier; one of them parts from her; the other will not, but casting in her lot with that of Naomi, Ruth bids adieu to Moab and its gods. They return to Bethlehem, where, in the extremity of poverty, Ruth goes to glean after the reapers in the harvest-field of Boaz, a wealthy kinsman of her deceased father-in-law, Elimelech.

Attracted by her appearance, and informed of her exemplary conduct towards her mother-in-law, Boaz directs his servants to shew her every favour. Thus encouraged, Naomi counsels Ruth how to behave, instructing her in the Jewish law of inheritance, and putting her in the way of claiming its provisions from Boaz. The sequel shows with what success. Boaz recognizes her claim, and espouses her, "in order to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritence."

From this union sprang David, the illustrious King of Israel, whose line the writer traces up, in conclusion, through Boaz, to Pharez, son of Judah.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL AND KINGS.

277. *Why were the books of Samuel so called?*

Because principally consisting of the acts of that prophet previous to the institution of the Jewish monarchy, and as partly written by him.

278. The portions of these books not written by Samuel are believed to have been written by Nathan and Gad, according to 1 Chron. xxix. 19—"Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer."

The books contain the history of Samuel's administration as judge, and of the regal government introduced by his mediation and established in the house of David. This history consists of three parts: 1. The account of Samuel's call by God—his

education and administration as prophet and judge over Israel. 2. The history of Saul's government and the early history of David, whom Samuel prospectively anoints king. 3. The account of David's government, with which the second book is entirely occupied.

The time comprehended in the history of the two books of Samuel covers a space of about 120 years, reckoning from the birth of Samuel to near the end of David's reign.

279. *Why was Samuel called of God?*

Because he was destined to be the successor of Eli and the precursor of the monarchy of Saul and David.

280. *What is the meaning of the word Samuel?*

It means "heard of God," and was bestowed upon the prophet because he was a child given in answer to prayer?

281. The mother of Samuel, although greatly beloved by her husband, remained childless. She begged earnestly and long to have this reproach removed from her. In her earnestness and agony of supplication before the altar of God, when she prayed with her lips although her tongue articulated no words, she was misunderstood by Eli, who accused her of being inebriated; but upon further examination the high priest blessed her, and dismissed her with the hope of a son. Samuel was in due time born, and, in consequence of the mother's vow, set apart for the service of God, under the tutelage of Eli.

282. *Why was Samuel entrusted with the Divine message in preference to Eli?*

Because the favour of God had been withdrawn frem the high priest, on account of the wickedness of his sons Hophni and Phineas, whom he had failed to correct.

283. These sons of Eli, although the properly appointed guardians of the faith and morals of the people, were, on the contrary, a terrible stumbling-block in their way. Through their extortions and impiety, "men" had learned "to abhor the offering of the Lord," and his wrath was kindled against the sacerdotal transgressors. When the Philistines invaded the land, the superstitious Israelites, imagining that the presence of the ark of the Lord, notwithstanding their criminalities, would act as a shield between them and their foes, sent to Shiloh where it rested, to have it brought into the camp and into the field of battle. Hophni and Phineas, as guardians of the ark, accompanied it, and when it was captured by the Philistines, fell beside it in the indiscriminate slaughter that ensued.

284. *What was the immediate cause of Eli's death?*

Hearing of the defeat of the Israelites, and that the ark of God was taken, and knowing that very many of the evils of the

B.C. 1096.—The Ark taken by the Philistines.

nation had been caused by his own negligence, he fainted and fell from his seat, and with the shock broke his neck.

285. The ark, which had been captured by the Philistines, soon vindicated its majesty. Being brought into the temple of Dagon, they set it up in front of that god. But the idols being—according to the apostle—but devils, not able to stand before the ark, flung themselves to the earth and were broken. "And when they arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground, and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold, only the stump of Dagon was left to him." Upon this the inhabitants of Ashdod, being sorely plagued, send the ark to Gath. From Gath it is sent to Ekron. But the same plagues and judgments following wherever it rests, after seven months, by the advice of their priests, they send the ark home again with presents and gifts into the land of the Israelites, and it is brought to Beth-shemesh. From thence it is carried to the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim, who sanctifies his son Eleazar to keep it.

286. *Why was the ark allowed to rest at Kirjath jearim instead of at Shiloh, its appointed place?*

Because of the fearful punishment which fell upon the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, fifty thousand of whom were smitten for irreverently looking into it.

287. The ark accordingly remained at Kirjath-jearim for twenty years, during which time the prophet Samuel remained in retirement, and the whole house of Israel became humbled before the Lord.

288. *Why did the children of Israel desire a king?*

Because of the ill government of the sons of Samuel, who walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes and perverted judgment.

289. *Why was Samuel displeased with their request?*

Because he considered it a declension from the high dignity which Israel had hitherto enjoyed as a people governed in an almost direct manner by the Divine presence.

290. The seventh verse of the eighth chapter makes this clear in these words:—"And the Lord said unto Samuel, hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected *me* that I should not reign over them.

291. *Why was Saul, who was a bad man, selected as the first king of Israel?*

That the people might have a foretaste of the kind of government they had preferred.

B.C. 1095.—Books of Samuel.

292. The request for a king being an act of contempt towards the theocracy established by the Divine direction, the character of Saul furnished their appropriate punishment. They desire to be led by a king, "like all the nations," and a king of the required pattern is given them. He is fierce, impatient, and headstrong, given over to the gratification of his own will, a tyrant, a consulter of soothsayers, and a demoniac. Having alienated the kingdom from himself, and seen it given during his lifetime to another, he perishes by his own hand upon the field of battle, and his rival reigns in his stead.

293. *What was Saul's first transgression?*

An intrusion into the priestly office by ordering sacrifices to be offered, which it was the duty of Samuel to do.

294. Whether Saul offered sacrifice himself or only set the priests to do so, is immaterial. It was his act of impatience and interference with the office of the prophet which offended God.

295. *Why were the Israelites at this time so powerless before the Philistines?*

Because, 1, the blessing of God was not with them, nor with Saul; 2, because the policy of the Philistines, in suffering no smith to be in Israel, had deprived them of their principal weapons of war.

296. The text (1 Sam. xiii. 19) says: "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, lest the Hebrews make them swords and spears. But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share and his coulter, and his axe and his mattock. . . . . So that it came to pass in the day of battle that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and Jonathan his son were they found."

297. *What was Saul's second transgression?*

Having been commanded to smite the Amalekites, and to extirpate them without reserve, he listened to the voice of the people and of his own cupidity by sparing a portion.

298. This stubbornness in persisting to rebel against the directions of Jehovah was now visited by that final rejection of his family from succeeding him on the throne, which had before been threatened; and which was now mystically represented by the rending of the prophet's mantle. After this second and flagrant disobedience, Saul received no more public recognition from Samuel, who now left him to his sins and his punishment, "nevertheless he continued to mourn for Saul."

299. *Why did Samuel mourn for Saul?*

Because he hoped that his grief might move God to

reverse his sentence against him and to restore him to his favour.

300. *Why did Samuel proceed secretly to Bethlehem when he went to anoint David as the successor of Saul?*

Because Saul had spread the belief that Samuel was his enemy; in consequence of which the elders of the people were afraid to entertain the prophet.

301. *Why was an evil spirit from the Lord said to have troubled Saul?*

Because, being rejected by God and given up to his own evil will, he naturally became the prey of the tempter of mankind, who was permitted to have power over him, in a manner more or less complete.

302. Some commentators say this was a real demoniacal possession, others that it was the mere result of an indulgence of obstinacy in the mind; for acting upon the character of man, earth contains not a more evil spirit than the guilty or troubled mind abandoned to its own impulses.

303. *Why did David fight with Goliah?*

Because the Spirit of the Lord being upon him (1, Sam. xvi. 13), he knew that he was destined to overthrow the giant, and deliver Israel.

304. After his attendance upon Saul, David returned home to Bethlehem. But the Philistines being gathered together against Israel at Shochoh, and the armies being assembled to repel their attack, the providence of God so orders it that David, leaving his occupation as a shepherd, should visit the field of battle. He is sent by Jesse, his father, with a message to his brothers, and thus hears of the state of affairs, and of the impious challenge of Goliah. Conscious of the Divine protection, he offers himself as a combatant with the gigantic foe of God's people. He refuses the aid of Saul's armour and weapons: takes his staff in his hand, and five smooth stones out of the brook, "and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine." David's challenge and conquest of Goliah may be read in 1 Sam. xvii. 41 to the end.

305. *Why was Saul's jealousy first excited against David?*

Because, in returning from the conquest of the Philistines, "the women came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing. . . . . And they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

B.C. 1060.—Friendship of Jonathan and David.

306. Saul hated David from that day forward. Though not acquainted with the anointing by Samuel, yet having received intimation that the kingdom should be given to another, he soon suspected from his accomplishments, heroism, wisdom, and popularity, that David was his destined successor; and instead of concluding that his resistance to the Divine purpose would only accelerate his own ruin, Saul, in the spirit of rage and jealousy, commenced a series of murderous attempts on the life of his rival. He first darts a javelin at David as he is playing upon his harp before him. He sends him upon the most dangerous expeditions. He seeks to embroil him with his chieftains by first giving David his daughter in marriage, and then presenting her to Adriel the Meholathite. He then sends murderers to assassinate David in his own house, from which danger he only escapes by the contrivance of Michal, his wife, who places an image in the bed, and lets her husband down through a window.

307. *Why was David brought to Saul's presence?*

Because his skill in music was made available to the cure or mitigation of the king's malady.

308. There can be no doubt that as the disease of Saul was partly supernatural in its cause, so the power of David's harp and voice was supernatural also. But the real reason why David should be introduced to court was, that he might get an insight into the method and etiquette of government, of which, as a keeper of sheep, he could have no opportunities.

309. *Why was Jonathan, whom the succession of David would necessarily supplant, so friendly to him?*

Because, from a similarity of disposition, the son of Saul delighted much in David; and it is probable that by Divine illumination he had been informed of his high destiny, and acquiesced in it.

310. The fraternal love of Jonathan for David, as described in Sam. xx., forms the most beautiful and most affecting portion of the books of Samuel.

Jonathan knew well what was to happen (says a popular commentator), and he submitted cheerfully to the appointment which gave the throne of his father to the young shepherd of Bethlehem. In the intensity of his love and confidence, he shrank not to think of David as his destined king and master; and his dreams of the future pictured nothing brighter than the day in which David should reign over Israel.

311. *Why did David flee to Achish, the king of Gath?*

Because Saul was seeking his life, and he felt insecure within the realm of Israel.

312. *Why did David feign madness while with Achish?*

Because he considered that his presence would be less noticed or feared, by assuming the character of one deranged.

B.C. 1055.—The Witch of Endor.

313. The vengeance of Saul upon any who might conceal or comfort David, was soon manifested. The high priest, Ahimelech, at Nob, had given him bread, and the sword of Goliah. No sooner does Saul hear of this, than he sends for and orders the massacre of Ahimelech, and eighty-four other priests, besides a great number of the inhabitants of Nob.

314. *Why did David spare Saul when he had his life within his power?*

Because he wished to prove to the king that he had no personal quarrel with him, and was acting only as the instrument of Divine Providence.

315. Saul, with three thousand men—chosen out of all Israel—was seeking the life of David, and had hemmed him in, as he thought, at the caves of Engedi. It was during a bivouac of Saul's troops that the incident occurred related in 1 Sam. xxiv. Saul had retired to a shelter to seek rest. Within this very cleft was David, his supposed enemy. Emerging silently, David succeeds in cutting off the skirt of Saul's robe, but cautions his people not to touch the king. David withdraws his men, and Saul is allowed to depart. When at a short distance, David and his men make their appearance, and demonstrate to Saul how easily his life might have been taken, had it been David's purpose to do so. Saul is struck with a momentary contrition, and makes a covenant with David in favour of his sons and descendants.

316. *Why did David again spare the life of Saul, when the latter had again set out with an army to destroy him?*

Because he considered that Saul, as the anointed king of Israel, was exempt from the ordinary laws of warfare.

317. The circumstances of this surprise and sparing were very similar to those at Engedi. Saul, with a chosen band, was seeking David at the hill of Hachilah, before Jeshinon; the latter, with his friends, being in the wilderness adjacent. At the fall of night, Saul and his company seek repose. David and Abishai, his lieutenant, now emerge from their camp, and approach the tent of Saul. He is sleeping within the trench, his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster; his generals lie around him. The sacred narrative informs us, that a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon Saul and his company. Abishai suggests to David to kill the king; David refuses; they take the spear and a cruise of water, and depart scatheless. Arrived at a safe distance, David lifts up his voice—awakens the sleepers—taunts the king's generals with their remissness in watching their master, and remonstrates with Saul upon his continued persecution of one who is incontestibly proved to be no enemy, but a friend. Saul is again contrite, and departs homeward.

318. *Why did Saul consult the witch of Endor.*

Because the prophet Samuel being dead, and God having withdrawn his communications from him, he could have

no knowledge of the future, except what he might obtain from the evil spirits.

319. *Why did the witch of Endor cry out when she saw Samuel?*

Because the prophet, permitted by God to revisit the earth in order to rebuke Saul, appeared before she had commenced her incantations.

320. Her surprise and terror clearly showed that it was by the direct will of Heaven, and not by the power of her magic, that the venerable seer was recalled to sight. Saul's reason is given in the text (1 Sam. xxviii. 15)—"And Saul said, I am in great distress; for the Philistines fight against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me, neither by the hand of prophets nor by dreams; wherefore I have called thee, that thou mayst make known to me what I shall do."

321. *Why did Saul at last commit suicide by falling upon his own sword?*

Because, being defeated by the Philistines at Mount Gilboa, and wounded, he was seized with a fit of despair, which he had not virtue enough to resist.

322 *Why were the remains of Saul and his sons burnt, instead of buried as was usual?*

Because, probably, that thus they might be preserved from further insult by the Philistines.

323. This is the first time that incremation, or funeral-burning, is mentioned in the Scriptures; and although a common and honourable mode of sepulture among the classical nations of antiquity, it was not regarded favourably by the Hebrews. The practice, however, became afterwards honourable with them, and so continued until the Babylonian captivity, when a change of opinion took place, and the practice was discontinued.

324. *Why did David order the death of the Amalekite who accused himself of killing Saul?*

To show his horror of such an act of sacrilege, as he considered the killing of a king and "the Lord's anointed."

325. *Why did Abner, Saul's general, proclaim Ishbosheth king of Israel, in opposition to David?*

Because, being a powerful but unprincipled soldier, he hoped to possess the reins of government himself, the imbecility of Ishbosheth favouring that project.

326. *Why did David suffer Ishbosheth to remain two years unopposed?*

Because of his stedfast regard for the family of Saul, and particularly for the memory of Jonathan, his friend.

WAR COSTUME IN DAVID'S REIGN.

327. *Why did Abner offer to deliver up Ishbosheth to David?*

Because that king had reproached him with some private misconduct, which the haughty general thus resented.

328. *Why was Abner slain by Joab, David's general?*

Because in a contest between the tribes, Abner had slain Asahel, the brother of Joab.

329. *Why did his captains revolt against and kill Ishbosheth?*

Because, seeing that the power of the kingdom had departed with the death of Abner, they thought to make their peace with David by the murder of the son of Saul.

330. David, however, so far from rewarding the assassins, ordered them to be mutilated, and afterwards hanged up over the pool in Hebron, honourably burying the remains of Ishbosheth.

This act of justice on the part of David had a most favourable effect upon the tribes which had hitherto stood aloof, for all Israel now came to him and saluted him king over the whole country.

331. *Why did David, when bringing the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim, to place it in his own city, allow it to remain at Perez-uzzah?*

Because of the calamity which befel Uzzah, who for irreverently touching the ark, was smitten and died.

332. The scene of this misfortune was hence called Perez-Uzzah. The whole process adopted on this removal of the ark was entirely contrary to the directions given in the law. The ark was not to be conveyed on a cart or drawn by any animals, but to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, by means of staves; which precluded the ark itself from being handled by the bearers in its removals. Indeed, it was forbidden on pain of death that any of the holy things should be touched even by the Levites. But the ark was the holiest of all the holy things, and hence the punishment of Uzzah, and the humiliation of David.

333. *Why did David afterwards remove the ark from the house of Obed-Edom into the city?*

Because, understanding that the Lord had blessed Obed-Edom and his house on account of the ark, he longed to remove it to his own.

334. *Why did Michal, David's wife, despise him?*

Because, upon bringing into his own house the ark of God, and being actuated by a holy enthusiasm, David danced before it as one of the ordinary choristers might have done.

335. That God approved of the king's conduct, and disapproved of that of his wife, was soon made manifest. Michal was stricken with sterility, and "had no child unto the day of her death" (1 Sam. vi. 23).

336. *Why was David's request to build a temple to the Lord refused?*

Because he was a man whose hands had shed much blood. The wars he had been engaged in were indeed just ones; but he was also to shed innocent blood, and to stain himself with other crimes. The privilege was denied him, but it was promised to his son and successor, Solomon.

337. *Why was the prophet Nathan sent to David to reprove him?*

Because of his sin with Bathsheba, and his cruelty in compassing the death of Uriah.

338. David takes Bathsheba to wife after the death of Uriah, but the anger of God is kindled against him, and misfortunes crowd upon him. Nathan, upon his sincere repentance, assures him of God's forgiveness, but announces a series of misfortunes as inevitably to follow. The child of David and Bathsheba dies—David's other sons fall into contentions and crimes—Absalom, his favourite, actually revolts against the king, and raises an army to oppose him. In short, the life of David from the murder of Uriah is one uninterrupted string of calamity and misery.

B.C. 1020.—Ahithophel Hangs Himself.

339. *Why did Absalom fly the kingdom*

Because, in revenge of the cruelty practised upon his sister Tamar by Amnon, his brother, he decoyed that prince away from Jerusalem and slew him.

340. *Why did Absalom raise a revolt against David, his father?*

Because he was impatient to rule as king of Israel, and being full of vanity and ambition could not wait the ordinary course of events.

341. *Why did David take this revolt so patiently?*

Because he looked upon himself as an offender in the sight of God, and accepted the trouble as a penalty for his sins.

342. This is strikingly exemplified in the instance of the cursing of Shimei. David is represented as walking near Bahurim with some officers of his household, when a man of the family of the house of Saul comes out and curses him, following up his verbal assault with a volley of stones. David's attendants begged to be allowed to chastise the insolence of "this dead dog." His reply is confirmatory of this view—"So let him curse. Let him alone . . . . and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day."

343. *Why did Ahithophel, Absalom's chief counsellor, hang himself?*

Because his advice in the conduct of the conspiracy was not followed.

344. Ahithophel was considered the wisest and most astute of all the people of Israel. The strong expression is used in the text that "the counsel of Ahithophel which he gave in those days, was as if a man should consult the oracle of God." He prescribes a course of conduct which Absalom proceeds to follow; but after a while, Hushai, a friend of David, comes, apparently in all sincerity, over to the side of Absalom. Ahithophel advises a prompt and sudden mode of action—a rapid attack, ere the forces of the king, his father, shall have time to be set in array against the rebellious son. Such a course would doubtless have been the wisest. This Hushai perceives; but in the interest of David, advises delay, lest any failure should damp the ardour of the newly organized revolters. This advice is taken, and David is saved. The far-seeing Ahithophel deemed the cause of Absalom to be lost, when he knew that the counsel of Hushai was to be followed. His pride could ill brook the neglect of the advice he had given, and which he had used to see so reverently regarded. On both accounts he abandoned the cause. He "saddled his ass and arose, and got him to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father."

B.C. 1017.—Fate of Absalom.

345. *What was the fate of Absalom?*

Being defeated by the army of David, his father, and in full flight, as he rode upon his mule beneath the spreading branches of a great oak, his hair was miraculously caught by the tree, and he remained suspended between heaven and earth.

346. Here he was seen by Joab, the captain of king David's host, who, taking three darts, thrust them through the heart of Absalom.

347. *Why was the king displeased with Joab?*

Because he had given strict orders, at the commencement of the conflict, that no one should kill or hurt his son Absalom.

348. *Why were the seven men of the race of Saul put to death?*

Because, by a breach of his treaty with the Gibeonites (Josh. ix. 15), on the part of Saul, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and a famine was sent upon the land.

349. David, ignorant of the cause of the drought, seeks the oracle of God and is informed of it. He then endeavours to make a compromise with the injured Gibeonites by offering them money. This they refuse, and demand full satisfaction upon the race of Saul. "The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel, let seven of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up." David, seeing no alternative, consents; and the famine ceases.

350. *Why did David number the people?*

From a motive of pride, which, in one whom God had so highly favoured, was a great crime.

351. David was incited to this act by Satan, as may be seen by a reference to 1 Chron. xxi. 1, where it is expressly stated. The folly and imprudence of such an act was obvious, even to Joab, an officer not very scrupulous, but sufficiently informed of the nature of the tenure by which his royal master held his kingdom, to know that the numbering of Israel would offend God. David's repentance immediately followed the consummation of his offence, and being told that the choice of three punishments was given him, namely, three years famine, a three months' flight before his enemies, or a three days' pestilence, he chooses the latter, preferring rather to fall into the hands of God than into the hands of men.

352. *Why were the people punished for what was the fault of the king only?*

They had incurred a great debt of punishment for joining in

the revolts of Absalom and Sheba, the son of Bichri, which was discharged upon this occasion.

353. *Why are the first and second books of Kings so called?*

Because they are thus designated by the Hebrews, whom our translators have preferred to follow.

354. The books of Kings were not written by one person. As there was all through their history a succession of prophets among the Jews, who recorded, by Divine inspiration, the most remarkable things that happened in their days, these books seem to have been written by those prophets. The first book relates the death of David and the accession of his son Solomon. His acts are contained in the first twelve chapters. Then ensues the division of the kingdom—Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa, and Jehoshaphat reigning over Judah; Jeroboam, etc., over Israel; while the prophets Abijah, Elijah, and Elisha appear in the remaining eleven chapters. Though the memoirs seem to have been left by contemporary authors, one—and that probably Ezra—made the compilation after the captivity, frequently inserting the very words of his authors, with some additional reflections.

The second book brings the history down to the conclusion of the kingdom of Israel and to the captivity of Judah at Babylon. David and his family occupy the throne for near 480 years; and after the captivity continue in some degree of honour till the coming of Christ. The kingdom of Israel subsists about 250 years. The second book contains the transactions of about 308 years.

355. *Why was David, who is shown to have sinned grievously, said to have been a man after God's own heart?*

Because, notwithstanding his sins, which were the result of human frailty, his whole mind and conduct were loyally framed upon the observance of the Divine polity.

356. David is said to have worshipped God with a perfect heart (1 Kings xiv. 8, 9; xv. 3, 5). Idolatry and disobedience are spoken of in the Bible as resulting from men's seeking or acting after "their own hearts" (1 Kings xii. 33). It is in this sense generally that David is so often mentioned in a favourable light. As a worshipper of the true God—as holding his regal power in dependence upon Jehovah, the true king of Israel—as ruling constitutionally, not despotically; faithful to the sacerdotal, as well as the prophetic elements of the government; also on account of great personal excellences—he was deservedly accounted a model king. He became the idol of the nation—the symbol of national weal.

357. *Why did Adonijah aspire to be king?*

Because, after the death of Absalom, he was the eldest son of David, and as such thought himself entitled to the succession.

358. David has been blamed for remissness in not repressing his forwardness, as his conduct tended to create confusion, and to frustrate the appointment of God. But the king was convinced that nothing would frustrate that order; and he would take measures, in due time, to curb the ambition of Adonijah, from which as yet he apprehended no danger.

359. *Why did Adonijah, upon the proclamation of Solomon as king, fly for refuge to the horns of the altar?*

Because his followers having deserted him, and being exposed to the penalty of treason, he thought only of saving his life, which the privilege of the sanctuary enabled him for the time to do.

360. *Why did David command Solomon to punish Joab and Shimei?*

The instructions given by David to his son, with relation to these two persons, did not proceed from any rancour of heart, or private pique, but from a zeal for justice, that crimes so public and heinous might not pass unpunished.

361. David and Solomon esteemed themselves, in a manner, defiled until this was done. Joab had behaved to David with great insolence after the death of Absalom. He had lately sided with Adonijah. But his worst crime was the treacherous murder of two great generals, who had put themselves under David's protection and were promoting his welfare. Only the fear of greater commotions had hitherto prevented David from bringing his nephew to public execution as the people expected. He laid the injunction upon his son, that when his power should be sufficiently strong, the impunity of such offenders might no longer destroy the commonwealth.

362. *Why was Abiathar, the high priest, deposed?*

Because he had joined the rebellion of Adonijah.

363. His participation in this revolt brought about the fate predicted to the house of Eli (1 Sam. xi.) He might justly have been put to death. Solomon merely banishes him to his own city; but the office of the high priesthood passes from his hands. Joab, hearing of the banishment of Abiathar, flies to sanctuary, taking hold of the horns of the altar; but even here the justice of the king reaches him, and, notwithstanding the sacredness of the place, he is executed.

364. *How did Solomon become celebrated for wisdom?*

Being desired to ask some particular gift from Jehovah, he chose that of wisdom?

365. In answer to his request, God said, "Behold, I have done according to thy words; lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee."

B.C. 1012.—Wisdom of Solomon.

366 *What was the first remarkable example of this gift which Solomon exhibited?*

His celebrated judgment between the two harlots (1 Kings iii. 16).

367. Two women dwelt together in one house. Upon a certain night, one of these was delivered of a child, and three nights later the other was also delivered of a child. The mother of the last born child accidentally killed it by overlaying it. But rising stealthily, she took the living child from her friend's side and substituted for it her dead child. The mother of the first-born—living—child immediately detected the cheat, but could not procure the restitution of her offspring, and she appealed to the king for justice. Solomon listened attentively to the two mothers, who both vociferously claimed the living child, and endeavoured to prove to the king that the dead infant was really the child of her companion. The king, to settle the point, hits upon an expedient. He calls for a sword, and proposes to divide the living child between the two mothers. To this the pretended mother consents; but the real parent, whose heart yearns for her offspring, prefers yielding her darling to her rival to seeing it slain. "Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment." (1 Kings iii. 27, 28.)

368. *Why did Solomon now begin to build the temple?*

Because, in addition to the faculty of wisdom, God gave the king riches, and blessed the realm with a lasting peace.

369. "Judah and Israel dwelt safely every man under his vine and under his fig-tree all the days of Solomon." (1 Kings iv. 25.)

DESCRIPTION OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

In a general way, the Temple of Solomon was an enlarged form of the tabernacle of Moses, built in stone, and secured with military defences like a citadel. As the worship of the Mosaic law consisted of bloody sacrifices of animals—such as oxen, sheep, and goats—Solomon's temple required one spacious quadrangle, or court, expressly for the purpose of holding and slaughtering the victims. These had their heads drawn down to a set of iron rings firmly fixed in the pavement, and it was the business of the priest officiating at the sacrifice to slaughter them with his own hand. A priest, then, in the time of Solomon, was a man who had to go to work very much the same as a butcher, with his shirt sleeves tucked up. This court was necessarily kept inaccessible to all except those who were concerned in the work of slaughter. On great festivals—such as the passover—the number of the victims was frequently so great that the space in this court did not suffice.

In a hot climate, such as Jerusalem, a temple, where the slaughter of victims for sacrifice was of daily occurrence, would require a copious supply of water for the mere washing away the blood from the pavement, for cleansing the victims and the parts of the sacrifices, besides for other uses. For this purpose, Solomon constructed a large

brazen reservoir, or molten sea, which contained about two thousand gallons of our measure, and which was kept filled by a water-wheel. The water from this reservoir was carried in smaller brazen vessels upon wheels to the different parts of the temple, as required.

The destruction of the victim being essential to the nature of the worship of God by sacrifice, this demanded the erection of a large altar of burnt-offering, or "holocaust," proportionate to the offerings of the nation, which the law directed to be offered only in one place. Hence a very large altar was required; and, in fact, this great altar was popularly termed among the Jews "Ariel," or the Lion of the Lord, from the rapid manner in which it consumed the victims that were laid upon it. The space required for this altar, the lavers, the vessels of brass for sprinkling the blood of the victims upon it, the flesh-hooks, etc., and the service of its officiating priests and other ministers and attendants, constituted a separate court of the temple. From the nature of the worship, consisting of the flesh of animals burnt upon a large fire, any assembly of the people assisting at the sacrifice under the same roof, as practised in the Christian worship, would be impossible. The worship was obliged to take place in the open air, otherwise the stench of the burning victims would have been unbearable. Jewish writers even say, that the altar was privileged in this sense, that let the wind be which way it might, *the smoke ascended directly upwards to heaven*—a privilege for which an assembled multitude might with good reason feel grateful.

For the people two courts were provided—an inner court for the men, and an outer court for the women. The ascent from the court of the women to that of the men was through a porch and up a flight of steps. No woman was allowed to enter the "court of Israel"—that for the men—except upon the occasion of her offering any victim, upon which, according to the law, she was to lay her hand previous to its being sacrificed, and for which purpose it was necessary for her to pass through the court of Israel to approach the altar.

In order to protect the people from the rain, or from the sun's rays, a covered cloister, supported on rows of pillars, surrounded the different courts. It was to one of these courts that our Saviour withdrew when there came on a sudden storm at the Feast of the Dedication (John x. 22). Further, as the temple of the nation, through the constant offerings of the people, would naturally come to accumulate immense wealth in coin and vessels of precious metals, it was necessary, in times so subject to the irruptions of marauding and plundering enemies, that it should be defended by walls and outworks, equal in power of resistance to those of any citadel; and also equally necessary that there should be a body of men in its service whose duty it was to be ready for its defence in case of an attack. The temple of a nation, in those times, generally speaking, also served as a bank of deposit for the king and private families—a good reason for making it doubly secure.

With a view to this security, the spot which God had pointed out for the buildings of the temple was most fitted. It was situated on the rock or mount Moriah, where Abraham, at the command of God, had offered his son Isaac.

The site chosen was a platform or longitudinal ridge of rock, the eastern side of which flanked the valley of Jehoshaphat, in a precipitous manner. The southern extremity looked down upon the valley of Ben Hinnom, and the side to the west was separated by a deep ravine from Mount Zion, on which David's palace stood. On these three sides, then, the platform was, by nature, inaccessible, and when

strengthened by high and thick walls, it became almost impregnable. On the north side the platform of rock adjoined the rest of the city by a narrow neck, the approach to which was secured by a tower of immense strength, afterwards called the "turris Antonia." This tower, with the walls that surrounded the temple, completed its defences.

The whole temple, thus secured, used to be called by the Jews "the Mountain of the Lord's House." The Lord's House itself was comparatively trifling in the way of dimensions as a building, being only double the size of the Tabernacle of the wilderness. Its importance lay in its sanctity, as being the abode of the Lord God of Israel, who is said by the prophets to have dwelt between its cherubim carved in olive-wood.

GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

As in the Tabernacle of Moses so in the Lord's house, the antichamber contained the shew-bread, the altar of incense, and the seven-branched candlesticks*; and was entered morning and evening by one single officiating priest. The inner chamber, the sanctuary or holy of holies, also contained the ark of the covenant, and was entered but once a year, on the day of expiation, by the high priest alone. The glory of these two chambers lay in their sanctity and their inward magnificence; outwardly they were scarcely distinguishable as an architectural feature, being themselves connected with other buildings, which contained chambers for the priests, and other purposes connected with the temple.

* Annexed is a representation of the seven-branched candlestick, tak n from a sculpture upon the arch of Titus at Rome. It forms a portion of the spoils seized by the Romans, when, in the year of our Lord 70, the temple and city of Jerusalem were taken and destroyed. Josephus says, that "after the Romans had destroyed the temple, the several things which were found within it were carried in triumph to Rome, namely, the golden table and the golden candlestick with seven branches." These were lodged in the temple built by Vespasian, and consecrated to Peace, at the foot of Mount Palatine. The arch mentioned above is still visible with its bassi relievi. In all probability the golden candlestick of the last temple was modelled strictly upon the pattern of the former ones, an l was exactly like them in appearance.

B.C. 1004.—The Queen of Sheba.

A distinction is to be observed between the House of the Lord and the Mountain of the Lord's House—the first term applying to these two sacred chambers, and the latter to the whole range of buildings with its walls and defences. The Mountain of the Lord's House was, in fact, held by a garrison of Levites, who watched it, in a complete state of military defence, night and day.

370. *Why did King Solomon marry the daughter of Pharaoh, King of Egypt?*

Because an alliance with his most powerful neighbour seemed most desirable at that juncture, and was best effected by that means.

371. This princess probably embraced the true religion, as her praises are rehearsed in the 44th Psalm, and in the "Song of Solomon;" although it is equally probable that she afterwards relapsed into idolatry, and became a chief instrument in the perversion of the king.

372. *Why was the long peace, mentioned in* 1 *Kings* iv. 25 *particularly necessary at this period?*

Because the special mission of Solomon was the erection of a temple to the Lord, an undertaking which could only be successful under the circumstances of profound peace, and a certain degree of amity with the neighbouring kingdoms.

373. Solomon wrote a letter to Hiram, king of Tyre, who had been his father's friend, requesting him to furnish workmen who were skilled in carving cedar-wood, and to supply cedar-timber from the mountains of Lebanon; offering terms to which Hiram replied in a very friendly manner.

Vast numbers were employed upon the building of the temple. Thirty thousand men worked, ten thousand by turns every month, in hewing timber, seventy thousand in carrying burdens, and eighty thousand in stone quarries in the mountains; over all of whom were set a proportionate number of overseers.

374. *How long was the temple of Solomon in building?*

In seven years the works were completed, and all Israel, with the princes of the tribes, and the heads of the families of Israel, were gathered together to King Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might carry the ark of the covenant out of the city David to its new resting place.

375. *Why did the Queen of Sheba pay a visit to King Solomon?*

Because, having heard of his great wisdom, she came to satisfy her curiosity, and to prove him with hard questions.

B.C. 975.—Solomon's Fall into Idolatry.

376. Because also in all probability this was a means used by Jehovah to spread a knowledge of the truth into the remote regions subject to the queen. She confessed that Solomon's wisdom surpassed all that she had heard reported. She blessed Jehovah for showing her such a king; and from her words (1 Kings x. 9) it is evident that she had imbibed some notions of the true worship.

377. *Why did the Divine blessing depart from Solomon?*

Because, disregarding the law of Jehovah, he added to the stores of his riches, the vastness of his armies, and the number of his wives; contracting alliances with the heathens around him, setting up altars to their idols, and joining in the sacrifices offered to them.

378. "Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant, and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom, but will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen. (1 Kings xi. 11—13.)

379. *Who was Jeroboam?*

He was the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, an active, talented young man, whom Solomon had selected and set over his tributes in the district of Millo.

380. Ahijah, the Silonite—a prophet of the Lord—met Jeroboam as he was going out of Jerusalem. Taking his own new outer garment or cloak, he divided it into twelve pieces, and as they were alone in the field together, he said to Jeroboam, "Take thee ten pieces, for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee." If Jeroboam proved faithful to the law of God, this possession was to be secured to him; if faithless, he, in his turn, should be punished.

381. *Why is it probable that Solomon died repentant?*

Because the book of Ecclesiastes, composed by him, and which is full of the expressions of deep repentance, may have been his last work, and dying legacy.

382. *Why did the people of Israel revolt from Rehoboam, the son and heir of Solomon?*

Because, upon their leaders making a petition to him to remedy some defects of the government, he, contrary to the advice of the elders of his council, answered them harshly, and with contumely.

B.C. 974.—Revolt of the Ten Tribes.

383. Jeroboam, probably knowing the temper of Rehoboam, foresaw this result, and was prepared for it. It was at his instance that the deputation had been sent. "Your father," said the leaders of Israel, "laid burdens upon us—now, therefore, do you lighten these burdens, and we will serve thee." Time to consider is asked by King Rehoboam; a council is held; the old men advise concession—the young men resistance. Rehoboam prefers to follow the latter plan. His father, he tells them, laid his hand upon them, but he will press it down. "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins." "My father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." (1 Kings xii. 11.) Upon these words the people cried out, "To your tents, O Israel; now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents."

Rehoboam made one more experiment. He sent Adoram, his chief collector of tribute, amongst the revolters, "but all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died." Rehoboam then shut himself up in Jerusalem.

It may be useful to distinguish the respective territories of the two kingdoms into which we find the dominion of David and Solomon now divided. Jeroboam possessed ten tribes, together with all the tributary nations eastward to the Euphrates. This formed the kingdom of Israel. Rehoboam retained only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with Philistine and Edom. But the whole of this territory, which was now called the kingdom of Judah, included scarcely a fourth of Solomon's dominion.

384. *Why did not Rehoboam endeavour to regain the allegiance of the revolted tribes?*

Because he was forbidden to do so, or to fight against Israel; Shemaiah, the prophet, being sent from God with a message to Rehoboam to that effect.

385. *Why did Jeroboam set up the worship of the golden calves at Bethel and Dan?*

Because he feared that his subjects, by going up continually to Jerusalem to worship according to the prescription of the Mosaic law, might, in time, be induced to revolt from him.

386. To prevent the people being shocked by too great a change, Jeroboam appointed feasts, corresponding to those observed in the temple at Jerusalem; and to encourage them by royal example, he attended in person at the altar in Bethel, and worshipped the golden calf which he had set up, with all his court and the officers of his household.

387. *Why was the hand of Jeroboam the king withered?*

Because, in contempt of the prophet sent against him from God, he ordered him to be seized, stretching out his arm for that purpose.

388. The impious king, however, is no sooner struck with this affliction than he is seized with compunction, and entreats the prophet's prayers that the use of his hand may be restored to him. The prophet then prays, and the king's hand is healed.

B.C. 950.—The Disobedient Prophet.

389. *Why was this prophet, who is called the "disobedient prophet," slain by a lion?*

Because he infringed the instructions given him by God, not "to eat bread, or to drink water, or to turn again by the way" he came.

390. This is one of those mysterious instances with which the Biblical history abounds. But some light is thrown upon the circumstance by the consideration that those to whom Jehovah has manifested Himself, miraculously speaking with them, and confiding his awful messages to their keeping, are called upon to correspond to this favour by a very scrupulous observance of the Divine law and commandment. As Moses, for one hasty expression, was debarred from entering the promised land, so this young prophet is, for a breach of his orders, met on his return home, and becomes the prey of a savage beast.

391. *Why did Jeroboam make war upon the kingdom of Judah?*

Because Rehoboam being dead, he considered there was a good opportunity to add the kingdom of Judah to that of Israel.

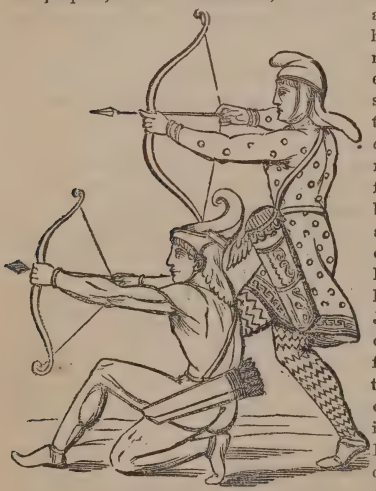
392. The account of this war is found in 2 Chronicles xiii. Abijah had succeeded Rehoboam; but although young, he felt no inclination to yield his kingdom to Jeroboam. The two armies were drawn up at mount Zemaraim, and Abijah, seeking to prevent an effusion of blood, addressed a remonstrance to the King of Israel. Israel, however, would not hearken, and the battle began by Jeroboam sending an ambuscade to attack the army of Judah in the rear. When the latter perceived the critical position in which they were, they cried to the Lord, and the priests began to sound with the trumpets, "and all the men of Judah shouted." This shout is made by Jehovah a cause of terror to the army of Jeroboam, which, accordingly, is panic-stricken, and takes to flight. The king and the army of Judah pursue, and the Israelites are destroyed with a great slaughter. After this war, Abijah, the son of Rehoboam, fell sick; out of mercy to him, and to spare his eyes the sight of those punishments intended for his father's race, he was called away, and died early. Jeroboam, after a reign of twenty-two years, died, and was succeeded by his son Nadab. In the second year of his reign, Baasha, a man of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him, and became king in his stead. And when he was king, he cut off all that were left of the house of Jeroboam.

HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH TO THE TIME OF ISAIAH THE PROPHET (B.C. 970 TO 750).

During the ensuing period of two hundred years, kings of the family of David succeeded each other on the throne of Judah. But they were not all like David—men who sought the honour of God, and the glory of his sanctuary. Abijah, the grandson of Solomon, was a wise and powerful king. He defeated Jeroboam, as we have seen; the service of the Temple flourished, and the kingdom prospered. Asa, his son, succeeded him, and was also a good prince. In his reign, the kingdom was attacked by an army of Ethiopians, under Zerah.

Asa gathered his army, and went out to meet him. He supplicates the help of Jehovah, who terrifies the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah, and they fly. Asa's faith, however, in the unseen protector of his kingdom, does not remain firm. Baasha, who had revolted against the house of Jeroboam, and had seized the kingdom of Israel, began to build a fortress at Ramah, from whence to attack Judah. Asa, forgetting his Divine Protector, takes gold and silver from the temple to bribe Ben-hadad, King of Syria, to make war upon Baasha. The plan succeeds for a time; Baasha withdraws, but Asa is informed, through the prophet Hanani, that God is displeased with him. The prophet is put in prison by Asa, who dies himself soon afterwards, and is succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat.

This king is faithful to the traditions of his ancestor David; maintaining the worship of the God of Israel. "Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance." (2 Chron. xvii. 5.) After a reign of twenty-five years, during which he was visibly protected by Jehovah, Jehoshaphat died, and was succeeded by his son, Jehoram. This was a wicked king. During a reign of eight years, he, in many ways, troubled Judah. He slew his brethren—married a daughter of Ahab, the idolatrous king of Israel, and introduced idolatry into Judah. Elijah, the prophet, is sent to warn him; whose counsel he despises; he perishes miserably, and is buried without any funeral honours. Ahaziah, his son, reigned now in his stead; but his career was equally wicked and brief. He was slain by Ahab, and Athaliah his mother seizes the kingdom. She puts to death all that they can find of Jehoram's family. Joash, however, an infant son of Ahaziah, is concealed and brought up in the temple. At the age of six years this prince is produced by the priest Jehoiada and acknowledged by the people, and Athaliah is deposed and slain. As long as Jehoiada lived, Joash was guided by his counsels, and remained firm in his faith. Collections were made and the temple repaired. But after the death of the good priest, Joash fell away into the old besetting sin of idolatry. It was now that Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest stood forth as a faithful witness of Jehovah. But Joash is impenitent. The Syrians of Damascus come and plunder the city, and the King of Judah is murdered by his own servants.



ASSYRIAN ARCHERS.

Amaziah, his son, reigned in his stead. He, at first, did what was right; but afterwards fell away, and suffered the fate of his father, being murdered by his own servants.

B.C. 970—750.—Kingdom of Israel.

After Amaziah succeeded Uzziah, the leper, whose disease came upon him in punishment of his profane intrusion upon the priestly office. He had begun well, but became proud of his prosperity, and presumed to enter the sanctuary in place of the appointed priests, and to burn incense at the golden altar. For this he was struck, and remained a prey to the disease of leprosy, living in a house by himself for the rest of his life, his son Jotham acting as regent. At the death of Uzziah, Jotham succeeded, and reigned peacefully sixteen years. At this time Isaiah prophesied.

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. (B.C. 970 TO 750.)

393. *Why was the prophet Elijah fed by ravens?*

Because of the drought which fell upon the land of Israel, in the reign of king Ahab (B.C. *circa* 918).

394. Ahab, the sixth king from Jeroboam, succeeded his father Omri, and excelled all his predecessors in the flagitious practices of that dark period. He married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians, a wicked woman, who brought her family's idolatry into the kingdom, besides the golden calves which Jeroboam had set up. The drought, mentioned above, was the first punishment denounced against Ahab by Elijah.

395. *Why is this prophet called the Tishbite?*

Because he was a native of Thisbe, a small town in the territory of Naphtali.

The additional appellation "of the inhabitants of Gilead," leads to the impression that Elijah had removed from his native place, and passing the Jordan settled in Gilead; of course without being incorporated with any new tribe.

396. *Why did Elijah go to dwell with the widow of Zarephath?*

Because the brook Cherith, beside which he sat, while miraculously fed by ravens, after a time dried up.

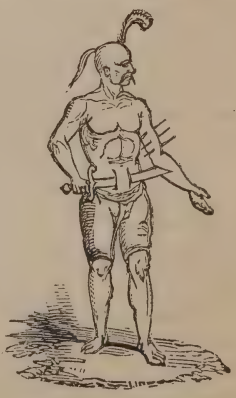
397. Here more miracles were worked by Providence. Exhausted by his journey, he asks and obtains succour of a poor widow, whom he meets with on the outside of the city. But she is as poor as himself. Elijah, however, having been directed to her, knows that her wants will be supplied, and bids her make a small provision for his refreshment. She complies, and has her reward. The drought continued; but her barrel of meal did not waste, nor her cruise of oil fail. Her son fell sick, it may have been under the privations occasioned by the want of rain. This calamity she judged to have been inflicted through the hands of the prophet as a punishment for some sin. The child dies, but is restored to life by Elijah.

398. *Why did Elijah challenge the prophets of Baal?*

After the drought and famine had continued for two years, the third year Elijah met Ahab the king, and bid him

gather all the people and the priests of Baal to Mount Carmel, there to meet. When all were assembled, Elijah came and said, in the hearing of all, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him. But if Baal, then follow him!"

399. Elijah then proposed, as a test, that altars should be erected, and victims slain. After which the priests of Baal and he should each invoke the God they served and the God who answered by fire should be acknowledged and adored as the true God. To this the people assented with acclamation. The idolatrous priests commenced—they built their altar, and laid upon it their victims. They invoked Baal, but Baal was dumb; "And it came to pass at noon that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god—either he is walking, or on a journey, or, peradventure, he sleepeth, and must be awakened." But they cried in vain. In vain they leaped upon the altar, or cut themselves with knives. No voice came, or any answer. The people, to prevent all chance of deception, were then ordered to pour water over the victims for the burnt-offering, and they did so till the water filled the trench that surrounded the altar of Elijah. The prophet invoked the name of Jehovah, and no sooner had he done so than fire from heaven descended, "and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." *Cuttings in the flesh* were common modes of expressing grief, and of deprecating the anger of their offended deities among the heathen nations, by whom the Hebrews were surrounded. With them the god was a being jealous of human happiness, rejoicing at its miseries, and to be appeased best by self-inflicted tortures on the part of the worshipper. Against any such practice the law had been directed, which is found in Lev. xix. 28, "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead." The Canaanites, in particular, were accustomed to lacerate themselves, under the influence of strong emotions. Hence the acts of the priests of Baal. In India, at the present time, such cuttings are common methods of honouring or invoking their sanguinary deities, whom the Apostle calls devils. The annexed figure represents a devotee of Western Asia, in the act of inflicting wounds upon himself, under this view; it is copied from the work of Eugene Roger, a French missionary of the 17th century. — *La Terre Sainte*, p. 353.



HINDOO SELF TORTURE.

400. *Why did the drought now cease?*

Because the people acknowledged the justice of God in their punishment, extirpated the idolatrous priests, and returned for the time to the worship of the true God?

B.C. 970—750.—Elijah carried to Heaven.

401. *Why did Jezebel vow vengeance against Elijah?*
Because he had ordered the execution of Baal's prophets.

402. Jezebel immediately made known to Elijah that her vengeance should follow him. He accordingly fled to Beersheba. This was in the extreme southern district of Judah; for the prophet knew that Jezebel was not one to threaten only. From Beersheba he continued his flight southwards, and proceeded a day's journey into the wilderness of Paran, where sinking, overcome with fatigue and hunger, he was miraculously relieved, as Hagar had of old received succour in the very same desolate region. Refreshed with his food, he went for forty days and forty nights, till he came to Horeb, where God appeared to him, and commissioned him to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha.

403. *Why did Ahab put Naboth to death?*
Because he coveted a vineyard belonging to him, and, at the suggestion of Jezebel, possessed himself of it by the murder of the owner.

404. To reprove the king was as dangerous as to resist him. No one dared to incur the peril. But Elijah was faithful; and, under the Divine directions, he went and found Ahab in the vineyard. Alarmed and indignant the monarch exclaimed, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" The prophet pronounced sentence on the transgressor, whose heart was smitten. He gave tokens of penitence, and the execution of the penalty was postponed.

405. *Why did Elijah bring fire from heaven upon the messengers of Ahab's successor?*
Because the king Ahaziah having fallen ill, and having first sent to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, to inquire his fate, sent afterwards to apprehend Elijah.

406. That the recourse had to this idol was an act of contempt to Jehovah, is stated in 2 Kings i. 3. Elijah afterwards sent to the king a message, announcing his approaching death.

407. *Why was Elijah carried to heaven in a chariot of fire?*
Because, having delegated Elisha to carry his message to Israel, and having anointed him as his successor, it pleased God to exhibit to the latter a manifestation of the sublime dignity and supernatural mission of Elijah.

408. The parting of Elijah and Elisha is beautifully described in 2 Kings ii: "And it came to pass when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said to Elisha, 'Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel.' And Elisha said to him, 'As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.' So they

went down to Bethel, and the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, 'Knowest thou not that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?' And he said, 'Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.' And Elijah said unto him, 'Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho.' And he said, 'As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.' So they came to Jericho." (The sons of the prophets that were at Jericho repeat the warning to Elisha, but he heeds them not. They then came to the Jordan together, and Elijah miraculously divides the waters, and they pass over dry shod. Elisha then asks that, when Elijah leaves him, a double portion of his spirit may be given him; which request is granted.) "And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, 'My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof; and he saw him no more."

409. *Why were the children who mocked Elisha killed by bears?*

Because the majesty of Heaven was insulted in the person of the prophet, and this signal punishment was intended as a token of the deference that would be exacted for the person and mission of Elisha.

410. *Why did Elisha sweeten the bitter waters at Jericho?*

As a mark of the Divine favour for the city that sheltered the prophet.

411. Elisha became celebrated throughout Israel for the miracles which he worked after having received a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. He multiplied a few loaves of bread, so as to feed a hundred men. He neutralized the poison that had been boiled in the pot by accident, for the meal of the sons of the prophets. He multiplied a cruise of oil wherewith to pay a poor woman's debt. He restored life to the son of the Shunamitess who sheltered him. He made the iron head of an axe to swim on the waters of Jordan. He revealed to Jehoram all the secrets of the Syrian army, and blinded the eyes of a Syrian company that was sent to arrest him, so as to bring them into the middle of Samaria before they knew to what place they were being led. He foretold to Jehoram the breaking up of the siege of Samaria, and his deliverance. He foretold to Hazael, king of Syria, that he should supersede Ben-hadad.

412. *Why was Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, struck with leprosy?*

Because he took a bribe from Naaman the Syrian, who had been cured by Elisha.

413. Naaman, general of the army of the king of Syria, was a favourite with his master. Unfortunately he was a leper. But it so happened that among his domestics was a little captive maid, whom a certain predatory company had stolen

from the land of the Hebrews: "And she said to her mistress, Would God, my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." Then Naaman went unto his lord and told him, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl from the land of Israel." The king advised him to follow up the hint, and gave him a letter to the king of Israel. So Naaman departed with the usual compliment of gold, silver, and changes of raiment. When the king of Israel received the message, he concluded that the whole business was only a covert scheme to bring about a quarrel between the two kingdoms. "Am I God," said he, "to kill and to make alive." He rent his clothes and exhibited all the marks of a man ill at ease. But word is taken to Elisha, who comforts the king, and bidding him remember that there is a prophet in Israel, desires him to send the Syrian general to him. Naaman arrives at the house of the prophet, who directs him by a message to go and wash seven times in the river Jordan, with the promise that upon his compliance his flesh should recover its soundness.

Naaman was piqued that the prophet should suffer him to come and go without honouring him with a personal interview. He also disliked the commonplace nature of the means to be used for his cure, although it is not said that he doubted of their efficacy. "I thought," said the disappointed general, "he will surely come out to me, and stand and call upon the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." (2 Kings v. 11, 12.) But Naaman appears to have been singularly blest with good and faithful attendants, one of whom ventured to remonstrate with his master, showing him how very easy the conditions were, and how unreasonable it would be to neglect them on account of their simplicity. Yielding to his advice, Naaman proceeds to the Jordan, and is healed. Then returning he wished to bestow some token of his gratitude upon Elisha, but none would be received. The servant Gehazi, however, upon the departure of Naaman, hastened after him, and pretending that the prophet had had a sudden demand upon his purse, obtained from the Syrian general a handsome largesse. Of course this is immediately discovered by Elisha, and the leprosy is inflicted upon Gehazi.

414. *Why was Jehu anointed king during the life of Ahab?*

Because he was intended as the instrument in God's hands for the punishment of that wicked king.

415. *Why did dogs lick up the blood of Jezebel, the wife of Ahab?*

Because of her cruelties, and especially on account of her procuring the murder of Naboth.

416. Jehu, the extirpator of the race of Ahab, was but an indifferent character; still, because he had faithfully carried out his mission, the throne of his race was secured to his family to the fourth generation. He was accordingly succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, by Jehoram, his grandson, Jeroboam II., his great grandson, and Zachariah, the fourth in descent from him. There his dynasty ended. In four more

reigns the kingdom of Israel terminated, and its subjugation by Assyria commenced. Finally, in the year 721 B.C., Salmanezer took Samaria, carried off the principal inhabitants captive, and planted them in Halah and Habor, cities of the Medes.

417. *Why was Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, when sent by the prophet to the bereaved Shunamite, ordered not to salute any one by the way, or to acknowledge the salutations of others?*

Because the business required despatch, and the nature of oriental civilities tended to a great expenditure of time.

418. The gestures and inflections of the body, which were made on an occasion of salutation differed at different times, varying with the dignity and station of the person who was saluted. In pronouncing the forms of salutation, "Be thou blessed of Jehovah," "The blessing of Jehovah be upon thee," "May God be with thee," etc., the Orientals placed the right hand upon the left breast, and with much gravity, inclined the head. At the present day if two Arab friends of equal rank meet together, they mutually extend to each other the right hand, and having clasped, they elevate them as if to kiss them. Having advanced thus far in the ceremony, each one draws back his hand and kisses it instead of his friend's, and then places it upon his forehead. If one of the Arabs be more exalted in point of rank than the other, he is at liberty to give the other an opportunity of kissing, instead of *his own*, the hand of his superior. The parties then continue the salutation by reciprocally kissing each other's beard, having first placed the hand under it, in which case alone it is lawful to touch the beard (2 Sam. xx. 9). In the presence of the great and the noble, the Orientals incline themselves to the earth, kiss their knees or the hem of their garment, and place it upon their forehead. When in the presence of kings and princes they prostrate themselves, smite the ground with their foreheads, or kiss the earth.

BOWING.

BOWING TO THE EARTH.

ANCIENT MODE OF SALUTING.

The Books of Chronicles.

419. *Why were the first and second books of Chronicles written?*

In order to supply an account of certain details concerning the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, which the writers of the preceding books of Samuel and the Kings had omitted.

420. The seventy Greek interpreters call these books "the first and second books of Paralipomenon," that is, "*of things left out.*" By the Hebrews they are termed *Debre-hajamin*, that is, "The words of the days," or as the English Bible has it, the "Chronicles." They are not to be confounded with the books so often quoted in the books of Kings and Samuel as the "words of the Kings," or the "Chronicles of the Kings," because the present books were written subsequently to the books of Kings and Samuel. The Chronicles were most probably written by Ezra.

MODERN PERSIAN BOWING.

The name Chronicles was given to these books by St. Jerome, because they contain an abstract, in the order of time, of the whole of the sacred history down to the period when they were written—3468 years. They appear to have been compiled out of the national diaries or annals. They contain many things not extant elsewhere; and several things related in the former books are here enlarged upon and elucidated. Hence the title "things omitted" (*paralipomenon*). The authenticity of these books is beyond question as well by a great mass of external evidence as by the indirect attestation of our Lord and his apostles.

421. *Why are there several manifest variations in names, facts, and dates between the books of Kings and Chronicles?*

Because the latter books were supplemental to the former, and were compiled at a much later date, when the vernacular language had undergone a change, when several places had received new names, or had undergone sundry vicissitudes.

422. Certain things were now better known to the Jews under other appellations; and from the materials before him the author of the Chronicles selected those passages which were best adapted for his purpose, and most suitable to the times in which he wrote. The variations in proper names will generally be accounted for by attending to the precise period of time spoken of, whence it will appear that frequently two different persons are described.

B.C. 536.—Ezra the Prophet.

423. *What are the principal contents of the two books of Chronicles?*

The first book contains the genealogies of those persons through whom the Messiah was to descend from Adam to the captivity, and to the time of Ezra; the first inhabitants of Jerusalem after the captivity; the reign and death of Saul; and the transactions of the reign of David.

The second book contains the history of the kingdom of Israel under Solomon; the accession of Rehoboam; the division of the kingdom; and the plundering of Jerusalem by Shishak; the reigns of Abijah and Asa, kings of Judah; the reign of Jehoshaphat; the reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah; and the usurpation of Athaliah; the reigns of Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham; of Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah; the subsequent reigns to the destruction of the city and temple; and the edict of Cyrus.

CHAPTER V.

THE BOOKS FROM EZRA TO DANIEL.

424. *Why was the book of Ezra written?*

Because it was desirable to preserve a circumstantial account of the events preceding and coincident with the return of the Jews from Babylon, the rebuilding of the temple, and the re-establishment of the Jewish ceremonial, which Ezra, as a principal actor, a priest, and a prophet, was well qualified to do.

425. The book of Ezra, accordingly, contains *memorabilia*, or records of events occurring at the end of the exile. It comprises accounts of the favours bestowed upon the Jews by Persian kings, of the temple, of Ezra's mission to Jerusalem, his regulations and reforms. The time comprised in the book is about seventy-nine years, or from B.C. 536 to 457.

B.C. 536.—Nature of Synagogue Worship.

426. *Why is Ezra called the son of Seraiah, when it is known that the latter was slain by Nebuchadnezzar more than a century before Ezra's time?*

Because it had become usual to call a person "the son," who was only the descendant of another.

427. Thus, son of David meant descendant of David, etc.

428. *Why is the era of this leader and priest very interesting?*

Because with him the Jewish system of worship underwent a complete reinvigoration, during which the people were thoroughly weaned from their old tendency to idolatry, and the synagogue with its observances arose.

429. *Why was the synagogue so called?*

Because it was *a place of meeting*. The two Greek words from which the term is formed having that signification.

430. *What was the nature of the synagogue worship among the Jews?*

When an assembly was collected together for worship—which was on all Sabbaths and festival days—the services began with a *doxology, i.e.*, a hymn of praise to God. A section was then read from the Mosaic law. Then followed, after the singing of a second doxology, the reading of a portion of the prophets. (Acts xv. 21; Luke iv. 16.)

431. The person whose duty it was to read placed upon his head, as is done at the present day, a covering called *Tallith*—a kind of veil, commemorative of the veil which Moses put upon his head when the brightness of his countenance was intolerable by the sinning Hebrews (Exod. xxxiv.) The sections which had been read in Hebrew were rendered by an interpreter into the vernacular, and hence arose the sermon or discourse, which, although at present delivered by one and the same person with the reader, is only an amplification of the interpreter's part. The reader or some other person then addressed the people. It was on such occasions that our Lord, during his ministry, and afterwards the apostles, taught the gospel; and it was in reference to these opportunities that Jesus warned his followers that they would be "put out of the synagogues." The meeting, as far as the religious exercises were concerned, was ended with a prayer, to which the people responded AMEN, when a collection was made for the poor. Synagogues were built in imitation of the temple at Jerusalem—that is, each was a quadrangle, having in the middle a small chapel on four pillars, standing on an elevated platform, on which lay the book of the law. In consequence of the needful washings,

synagogues were often built near running water. Synagogues came into existence as a consequence of the expansion of Judaism, and spread wherever it gained a footing. Their origin cannot be satisfactorily referred to an earlier period than the exile, when the Israelites, severed from their temple and scattered abroad in strange lands, would naturally meet together for worship, and so become habituated to particular localities and provide suitable structures. The practice once introduced was perpetuated when they returned to their mother country. In the time of our Lord every considerable town in Palestine had its synagogue; large cities had several, and in the capital there were above four hundred. Synagogues were also found in the cities of Syria, Asia-Minor, and Europe, which had a Jewish population. The Talmudists, indeed, assert that wherever were ten free adult Israelites, there ought a synagogue to be erected. The duty and cost of building synagogues lay with private individuals, and were sometimes voluntarily undertaken by heathens.

432. *Why was the book of Nehemiah so called?*

Because it was written by the captive Jew of that name, who was instrumental in restoring the temple and worship of the Israelites after their enslavement in Babylon.

433. Nehemiah was held in good repute by Artaxerxes, king of Persia, and was his chief cup-bearer. The books of Nehemiah and Ezra concern the same facts, and should be considered together. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah were originally combined, and were called the first and second books of Ezra. In their subject-matter they are manifestly a continuation one of the other. But they form no complete and consecutive narrative. Their aim was not to form a history which should continue that of "Kings" and "Chronicles," but to narrate the chief events that accompanied the return of the exiles. Like all the other writings in the Bible, the chief aim and tendency of the books are of a religious nature; and whatever it has of history, is only incidental and subsidiary.

THE LEADING FACTS CONTAINED IN THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

Cyrus, in the year B. C. 536, that is, in the first of his reign, permits the captive Jews to return to their native land, restoring to them the sacred vessels which had been taken from the Temple. Having reached Jerusalem, they take steps to restore the worship; build an altar for sacrifice, celebrate the feast of tabernacles, and lay the foundation of the temple amid the songs of the young and the tears of the aged, who had seen and remembered the splendours of the former house.

The Samaritans express a desire to take part in the work, but are refused by the Jewish leaders; whereupon they use their influence with the king of Persia, in order to interrupt the building. In the reign of Darius Hystaspes, the Jews, under the exhortations of their prophets, continue the structure with the special permission and assistance of that monarch. Accordingly they bring the temple to a completion, dedicate it, and celebrate the passover. Under Artaxerxes Longimanus, Ezra proceeds with a second colony to Jerusalem, having in his hands a letter from the king; finding that during his absence many mixed marriages had taken place, contrary to the Mosaical law, Ezra is filled with grief, offers to God a penitential prayer, and takes measures to remedy the evil.

B.C. 536—515.—The Second Temple.

Nehemiah hears at Susa of the lamentable condition of the land of his fathers. His dejection is noticed by the king, who, upon an inquiry learns the cause, and gives his cup-bearer leave to go to Jerusalem and rebuild its walls (Neh. i. ii.) The Jews begin the work, and notwithstanding various hindrances thrown in their way, accomplish their purpose. The people complain of their poverty, and of the oppression and usury of the richer Jews, which leads Nehemiah to speak of his own disinterestedness, and to compel them to cease from their evil courses, and to restore the property taken in mortgage. The fortifications of the city being completed, watchmen are appointed, and the governorship is assigned to Nehemiah's brother, Hanani, and to Hananiah, the ruler of the palace. Ezra reads to the people the book of the law, the import thereof being expounded to them in the Chaldean tongue, with which alone they were now familiar. Feasts and observances are kept. The covenant with God is renewed and sealed. The population of Jerusalem being still insufficient, it is replenished by drafts from the rural districts. Certain lists of priests, and the succession of the high priests are then given, the walls are dedicated, and the books conclude with rules for organization, and some exhortations.

THE SECOND TEMPLE.

On the first building of the temple, Solomon had received letters of congratulation and good-will from all the neighbouring princes and kingdoms; and on the setting up of the altar, and the dedication of the house of the Lord, the whole kingdom rang with shouts of joy, and all the neighbouring people rejoiced with Israel. But when the remnant of the children of the captivity came back, few in number, and broken in spirit, to rebuild a second temple out of the ruins which the sins of their nation and its rulers had brought upon the holy place, they soon found that though the first building had been a work of joy and peace, the present one would be a work of strife and danger. The Samaritans first sent to say that they were of their kindred, and desired to join with them in building. But Zerubbabel answered, "You have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us." Upon this the Samaritans joined in league with the other people of the country, and they hired counsellors in the Persian court to intrigue there, that the decree of Cyrus might be reversed. After Cyrus was dead (B.C. 530), and in the reign of his son, the Samaritans renewed their intrigues, and so far succeeded, that they obtained a decree forbidding the work to proceed. This took place in (522 B.C.), sixteen years after the date of the decree of Cyrus. It was now that Haggai and Zechariah appeared and fulfilled their mission. Zerubbabel then took courage, and commenced the works anew; upon which the opposition from the Samaritans was immediately renewed, and the matter was brought before king Darius, who was now on the throne. Darius soon ended the dispute by confirming the decree of his grandfather, Cyrus, and by ordering that if any man offered any more opposition, a beam of wood should be taken out of his house, and he should be hanged upon it. Armed with this decree, Zerubbabel pushed forward the works of the temple, and at length they were completed in the month Adar, of the sixth year of king Darius. The feast of unleavened bread was kept by all the people with the greatest joy on the occasion of the solemn dedication of the second temple. Thus the work prospered, and was completed under Zerubbabel. The young

rejoiced; but the old men, who remembered the first temple, grieved at its curtailed splendour and proportions. This second building was only half the size of the first, and its materials were vastly inferior.

434. *Why is the book of Esther so called?*

Because it contains the history of the queen of that name.

435. *Who was the writer of the book of Esther?*

It is generally supposed to have been Mordecai.

436. In Esther ix. 20, it is said, "And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the King Ahasuerus, both nigh and far." The Jews have a greater respect for this book than for any of the prophets, whose works, they say, will perish at the coming of the Messiah; whereas this will subsist with the books of Moses, and the feast of purim (Esther ix. 21) will never be abolished.

437. *What is the date of the events narrated in the book of Esther?*

It is not agreed whether these events happened before or after the Babylonian captivity; but it is now commonly supposed that Esther was married to Darius Hystaspes, A.M. 3489, about the time of the dedication of the temple.

438. He had been upon the throne of Persia and Media six years, and he reigned thirty years more. Josephus differs from other authors, thinking that Esther was the queen of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who was a great friend of the Jews.

439. *What were the circumstances that led to the elevation of Esther?*

King Ahasuerus gave a great feast to his princes and nobles; when merry with wine, he sent his royal chamberlain to the apartments of Vashti, his queen, inviting her presence, being desirous "to show the princes and people her beauty and magnificence."

440. *Why did Vashti refuse to appear?*

From a haughty contempt of the king's request, and a wish to exhibit her independence of his authority.

441. *Why did the king depose her for this refusal to appear?*

Because it was represented to Ahasuerus that the bad example of queen Vashti would influence the domestic manners of the whole Persian empire, and that hence the Persian women would be insubordinate to their husbands.

B.C. (about) 521—495.—History of Esther.

442. *How was Esther introduced to king Ahasuerus?*

When the deposition of Vashti was completed, a successor in the king's favour was sought for; and by the providence of God, Esther was brought forward.

443. Many candidates for the vacant throne of Vashti were, through the diligence of the king's officers, found; out of these, Ahasuerus was to make his choice. Among the dwellers in Shushan the palace, there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, a Benjamite—a captain whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had carried away; with him was Esther, an orphan, the daughter of his uncle, who had been brought up by him, and the maid was fair and beautiful. "So it came to pass, that when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, the keeper of the women" (Esther ii. 8). Finally, the king prefers Esther to all the candidates for his favour, "And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight, more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti" (Esther ii. 17).

444. *Why did Mordecai refuse to bow to Haman, when the latter was advanced by the king to a high dignity?*

Because Haman was an Amalekite, to whom no Jew could offer any act of obeisance without forfeiting his self-esteem.

445. The Hebrews had once sworn to exterminate the Amalekites, and to the extent of their means they had done so. The power of that people had been broken and reduced to nought by them, and their hate was not yet appeased; this one captive Jew was the exponent of the feeling of his whole nation, and it is probable that his hopes of the future restoration of Israel through the influence of Esther may have actuated Mordecai upon the present occasion.

446. *Why did not Haman at once seek the punishment of Mordecai?*

Because he counted it as insufficient for his revenge to lay hands upon him only, and sought to destroy all the Jews that were in the kingdom of Ahasuerus.

447. With this view, he went home and drew lots from an urn, to determine in what month the nation of the Jews was to be destroyed. The lot came out for the twelfth month, which is called Adar. He then went to the king, and representing to him that there was in his dominions a people that had laws and ceremonies unlike all other people, and that they were noted for being rebellious against kings, he urged that it was expedient for the safety of the king's empire that they should be destroyed. In this manner he obtained letters from Ahasuerus to the effect that on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month the people should everywhere rise up to kill

and destroy the Jews, both young and old, women and little children, in one day, and to make a spoil of their goods. The couriers that were sent out made haste to fulfil the king's commandment. And immediately the edict was hung up in Shushan, the king and Haman feasting together, and all the Jews that were in the city weeping.

448. *Why did Mordecai, when he heard of the edict, rend his clothes, cover himself with sackcloth, and sit at the gate of the king's palace?*

Because he concluded that thus he should attract the notice of the king's servants, who would report his behaviour to queen Esther.

449. Word was accordingly soon carried to her that Mordecai sat mourning at the king's gate. Esther sent to know the reason. Mordecai sent in reply a report of all that had happened, and gave her messenger a copy of the edict. Esther, on receiving this, understood what was required of her, and sent answer to Mordecai that he must know that it would be death to her to go into the inner palace to the king, except the king should hold out the golden sceptre in token of clemency, and that she had not been called to the king for thirty days.

At Mordecai's reiterated request, Esther consents to infringe the law and to intrude upon the privacy of the king, should he fail to hold out to her the golden sceptre.

450. *Why did Ahasuerus invite Esther to his presence?*

Because the Jews and Esther having implored the blessing of God by a solemn fast of three days and nights, the heart of the king was secretly moved to do so.

451. On the third day Esther attired herself in her royal apparel, and trembling as she passed through the suite of apartments, she presented herself to the king. She pleased his eyes, and he extended to her the golden sceptre, and said to her, "What wilt thou, queen Esther, what is thy request? If thou shouldest ask one half of the kingdom it shall be given thee." Esther answered by requesting that the king and Haman would come to a banquet which she had prepared. The king graciously assented, and word was sent to Haman in the palace, who made haste to join the king at the banquet. Esther, however, did not then make her request known, but promised to do so on the following day, if the king and Haman would accept from her a second banquet.

452. *Why did Haman cause a gallows fifty cubits high to be erected for Mordecai?*

Because he flattered himself that the high favour in which he now stood with both the king and queen would enable him to do whatever he pleased with his enemy.

B.C. (about) 521—495.—History of Esther.

453. He boasted before his wife and friends of his riches and greatness, and that Esther the queen had again invited none but himself to the second banquet. But nevertheless all this honour would be as nothing so long as the Jew Mordecai sat unmoved at the king's gate.

454. *What particular circumstance turned the scale in Mordecai's favour?*

He had been so fortunate as to overhear the treasonable conversation of two officers of the royal household. A plot to assassinate Ahasuerus was thus frustrated; for Mordecai immediately communicated the intelligence to the king, and the traitors were hanged.

455. The night following Esther's first banquet was passed by the king in sleeplessness. He accordingly, to divert the time, had the records of the empire read aloud to him.

Here the providence of God directed the readers to that portion which gave an account of the treasonable attempt frustrated by Mordecai. The king asked with roused attention what reward had been given to this faithful subject. It was replied, "He hath received no reward at all."

At this moment Haman was coming through the palace gate to proffer to the king his request that Mordecai might be hanged upon the gallows. The king, upon the entrance of Haman, put the question to him, "What should be done to the man whom the king has a mind to honour?" Haman, thinking that of all men deserving of honour he was the most eminent, answers, "The man whom the king delighteth to honour should be clothed with the king's apparel, be set upon the king's horse, have a royal crown put upon his head, the first princes and nobles of the land should hold the bridle of his charger, and proclamation should be made before him through the streets of the city. Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour."

At the king's command, which admitted of no dispute, Haman had to arise, array Mordecai the Jew, and carry out to the very letter the terms he had prescribed for himself.

456. *What was the end of Haman?*

He was, upon the discovery of his plot to the king by Esther, ordered to be hanged upon the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai.

457. *Why was the edict against the Jews rendered innocuous?*

Because of the great influence of Esther with king Ahasuerus.

458. Mordecai was now called, and received from the king the ring which he had commanded to be taken from Haman. Esther confessed to the king that

Mordecai was her uncle; she threw herself at the feet of Ahasuerus and entreated that all measures taken against her people might be stopped. But by the laws of the kingdom no edict that had gone out with the king's seal affixed thereto could be reversed. Therefore the king assented that letters should be written in his name empowering the Jews everywhere to defend themselves should they be attacked. And when the thirteenth day of the month came, the princes and governors, knowing Mordecai to be a Jew and a prince of the palace, in great power, in all cities and villages favoured the Jews, so that when they were attacked, instead of being overcome they achieved a most triumphant victory over their enemies.

459. *Why was the feast of Purim instituted?*

To commemorate this most signal interposition of God in behalf of his scattered people.

460. Accordingly, from that time to the present hour, the Jews, under every vicissitude of fortune, have kept the feast of the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month, and there is no name among them more honoured than that of Esther.

461. *Who was the author of the book of Job?*

It is rather uncertain by whom this book was written. Some attribute it to Moses; some to Job himself; some to one of the prophets. The point is immaterial.

462. *Who was Job?*

He is supposed to have been of the race of Esau, and the same person as is mentioned in Genesis xxxvi. 33.

463. The time that Job lived is also a matter of doubt, but it is probable that it was while the Israelites groaned under the Egyptian bondage, or sojourned in the wilderness. The object of the book is to show that sometimes the wicked prosper, while the good are plunged in affliction. Like the rest of the Old Testament, it has a literal and an allegorical meaning. The style is very poetical, though, at the same time, simple, like that of Moses. It is supposed that a great portion of the book of Job has been lost. St. Jerome, whose authority is great, says about eight hundred verses have disappeared.

HISTORY OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

Job is represented as a dweller in the land of Uz; an upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil. He is a kind of petty prince, in the kingdom of Edom. His substance is great, his family numerous, his happiness complete. Job is as solicitous for his children's souls as for their bodies; hence he rises early to offer sacrifices for them; for Job said, "Lest, perhaps, my sons have sinned, and cursed God. Thus did Job continually." But the enemy of God and man, Satan, is envious of Job's felicity. He insinuates, before the angelic court, that Job does not serve God for nought—that he finds godliness profitable, and so is godly. The enemy obtains leave to prove the patriarch, by sending afflictions upon him—he

B.C. (about) 1520.—The Book of Psalms.

may take from him his wealth, his children, his friends, everything, except his life. The book then narrates how this is done, and with what effect. Job, in the midst of all his cruel persecutions, still blesses God.

The most exquisite tortures, the reproaches of his wife, and the lecturings of his pretended friends, fail to shake his faith and confidence in the Divine goodness.

When stripped of everything, and sitting diseased upon a dust-heap, and sunk to the lowest depths of human distress, he exclaims, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The main portion of the book is taken up with the sad reflections of Job upon the calamities to which man is naturally subject. He complains not of his own case; he justifies God in his providence; the remonstrances of his friends and Job's replies are sublime examples of the power of diction.

The judgment of the All-wise is invoked by Job. This is given; for God appears in a whirlwind, and without taking part in the views of either Job or his friends, awakens a sense of his impotence and short-sightedness in the heart of Job, who, in consequence, humbles himself still more under the mighty hand of his Creator. This conduct is approved, while the three friends are severely condemned. Recompense is made to Job. A social feast ensues; after which Job lives one hundred and forty years, in great abundance and high repute. "He had seven sons and three daughters, and in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job." (Job xlii. 13—15.)

464. *Why was the book of Job written?*

Bishop Lowth is of opinion that the principal object of the poem—for this book takes the highest form of poetry—is the third and last trial of Job, from the unkindness and injustice of his accusing friends; the consequence of which is, in the first place, the anger, indignation, and contumacy of Job, and afterwards his composure, submission, and penitence. The design of the book is therefore to show men, that having a due respect to the corruption, infirmity, and ignorance of human nature, as well as to the infinite wisdom and majesty of God, they are to reject all confidence in their own strength and righteousness, and to preserve, on all occasions, an unswerving and unsullied faith, submitting, with becoming reverence, to the Divine decrees.*

465. *Why is the book of Psalms so called?*

Because written to be sung: the word psalm being interpreted to mean a musical instrument.

466. According to Venerable Bede, the word psalter is derived from an instrument of ten strings, resembling the Greek letter Δ.

* Lowth's "Lectures on Hebrew Poetry."

467. *Why is the authorship of the Psalms ascribed to David?*

1. Because it is known that David, not being permitted to build the Temple, made very great preparations for its erection by his son; among which preparations was the training of four thousand singers, by two hundred and eighty-eight masters of music. 2. Because his name is affixed to the majority of them. 3. Because others, without his name appended, were quoted as David's by our Saviour and the apostles.

468. The Psalms are called by the Hebrews SEPHER TEHILLIM, "Books of Hymns," or "Praises." This title being considered by the seventy translators not quite appropriate, they called them *Psalmoi*—psalms or lyrical odes—that is, odes, to be accompanied with music. The word psalter is the same as "psaltery," so frequently mentioned in the book, "a stringed instrument."

469. *Why are some of the Psalms inscribed "of Asaph," "of Heman," etc.?*

Because in all probability these Psalms were directed to them, as the persons charged to sing, or to see that they were sung.

470. The question of the authorship of the Psalms has been much discussed. The Fathers of the Church are divided in opinion upon the subject; some of them regarding David as their sole author, others looking upon him as their editor. The authorship of a few has been ascribed to Moses, of others to Ezra. The question is unimportant, since they are all equally the result of inspiration. Dr. Kitto says: "There is scarcely any book of the Old Testament of which the Divine inspiration and canonical authority are established by more satisfactory and complete evidence. The evidence from the New Testament alone is abundant; for the book is there quoted and referred to as divine by Christ and his apostles, no less than seventy times. The Divine authority of some of the books of the Old Testament has, on various grounds, been impugned by persons who have admitted the inspiration of the other books, and have not questioned the general fact of Divine revelation; but the authority of the Psalms has not been questioned by any who have faith in the sacred character of any part of the Scripture. The eminently practical character of the Psalms, their beautiful and touching utterance of feeling to which every devout heart responds, has rendered the book peculiarly dear to the pious in all ages.

471. *Why is the book of Proverbs so named?*

Because it consists of wise and weighty sentences, regulating the morals of men, and directing them to wisdom and virtue.

472. These sentences are also called parables, because great truths are often couched in them under certain figures and similitudes.

473. *Why is the existence of the book of Proverbs a strong evidence of the truth of revelation generally?*

Because the wonderful amount of knowledge and wisdom embodied in them is a direct proof that Solomon, their author, received the gift which he was promised by God.

474. The book of Proverbs is thoroughly ancient and oriental in its character, but it is distinguished from all other examples by its thoroughly religious tone. "The fear of the Lord (religion and piety) is the beginning of knowledge." This golden truth is the great burden of the book. It stands as part of a brief introduction (Prov. i. 1—9), which, with less brevity, states what the reader has before him; and at the end, assuming the tone of a parent, exhorts him to love and pursue religious truth as not only highly useful, but pre-eminently ornamental. With the 10th verse begins the first and chief collection of maxims, which extends to chap. xxii. 16. Next follows a less collection, xxii. 17, xxiv. 22. A few proverbs ensue, xxiv. 23—34. Then comes a more ample gathering of wise words, xxv.—xxix. This body of didactic poetry concludes with three short appendices. (1.) "The words of Agur, the son of Jakeh, the *prophecy*." (2.) "The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him." (3.) We then have a beautiful picture of an oriental housewife.

475. *Why is the book of "Ecclesiatses," or the preacher, so called?*

Because the author, Solomon, "the son of David, king of Jerusalem," shows, by a series of forcible exhortations, the vanity of the world and the necessity of religion.

476. The title is taken from the Septuagint. Its Hebrew name is of similar import, meaning "a preacher," or one who addresses an assembly. Although the name of Solomon does not occur in the book, the general opinion, in all ages, has ascribed it to him. The tradition of the Jews states that Solomon composed this work in his old age, after he had repented of his former vicious practices, and had become, by sad experience, fully convinced of the vanity of everything terrestrial, except piety and wisdom. Many parts of the work itself corroborates this view. The acknowledgment of folly and sin, on the part of its author, implies that it was composed after he had apostatized from God, and had subsequently repented of his past conduct. Indeed, the book bears strong internal proof of what we elsewhere learn about king Solomon.

477. *What is the nature of the book entitled "The Song of Solomon?"*

It forms one of the canonical books of the Old Testament —was written by the king whose name it bears—and, under

the figure of a marriage, typifies the intimate relation subsisting between Christ and his Church.

478. The book is quoted in the New Testament. (See Matt. ix. 15; xxii. 2; John iii. 29; 2 Cor. xi. 2, etc. To be fully understood and appreciated, requires a studious and enlightened mind. This is, doubtless, one of those portions of the sacred writings, which, according to St. Peter (2 Peter iii. 16), are converted by "the unlearned and unstable unto their own destruction."

479. *Why is Isaiah called the Evangelical Prophet?*

Because of the number and variety of his prophecies concerning the advent and character, the ministry, the sufferings and death of Christ, as also the planting and permanent extension of his kingdom.

480. So explicit and determinate are his predictions, in reference to the person and passion of Christ, as well as so numerous, that he seems to speak rather of things past than of events yet future; hence he may be called an evangelist rather than a prophet. No one, indeed, can be at a loss in applying these prophecies to the events of the Gospel history.

481. *Why is Isaiah sometimes called the Prince of all th Prophets?*

Because his book abounds with such transcendant excellences, that it affords the most perfect model of prophetic poetry; and the dignity of his subject exceeds those of all the other prophets put together.

482. Isaiah is so little known as to his personal history, that it is difficult to make out a connected chain that shall show his character and mission upon the ordinary plan. He exercised his prophetical office in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. It is inferred from Isa. vi. 1, compared with vii. 1, that he did not begin his work till the year that king Uzziah died (B.C. 752), and as he appears to have been alive in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, his public ministry lasted for about half a century. With a view to give effect to his teachings he was accustomed to wear mean, unsightly, and uncomfortable clothing (Isa. xx. 2). His ordinary abode was Jerusalem; and he was probably twice married. By his first wife he had a son who was called Shear-jashub (*the remainder will turn*). His second wife, called also "the prophetess," bore him another son, to whom was given the symbolical name of Maher-shalal-hash-baz (*hasten the booty! quick to the prey!*), as indicative that before the child should be old enough to call its parents by their names, the enemies of Judah, namely Syria and Samaria, should be vanquished and plundered. Another name, Immanuel, was given to the child, in token of the intervention of God for the deliverance of his people

B.C. (about) 630.—The Prophet Jeremiah.

Isaiah's religious instructions were addressed chiefly to Judah and Jerusalem, yet he turned his prophetic eye on neighbouring lands. Under Jotham, whose reign was in general prosperous, Isaiah had little other duty than to enforce moral principles. The weakness and idolatry of Ahaz called forth greater exertions from the prophet, who manifests political wisdom and zeal. Chiefly, however, in the first half of Hezekiah's reign, did he employ his now mature powers for the high religious, moral, and political ends which it was the aim of his life to promote. A diversely-related tradition makes him to have suffered a death of violence under Manasseh (698—643). According to this account Isaiah was sawn asunder by order of the idolatrous monarch.

483. *Why is the book of the Prophecies of Isaiah a strong proof of the authenticity of the whole Bible?*

Because of the complete fulfilment of those prophecies; a result which no human power could have brought about, and which fulfilment the entire page of history sacred or profane establishes.

484. The clear and satisfactory accomplishment of Isaiah's predictions place his authority and inspiration beyond doubt. He foretold the captivities of Israel and Judah, and described the ruin and desolation of Babylon, Tyre, and other nations. He called Cyrus by his name, and described his conquests and conduct towards the Jews above 200 years before the birth of that king. But his prophecies concerning the Messiah seem almost to anticipate the Gospel narrative. In these he describes the Divine character of Jesus Christ; his appearance; his peculiar qualities and virtues; his rejection; the very circumstances of his passion and death; and, finally, his resurrection and the triumph of his kingdom.

485. *Why were the Prophecies of Jeremiah given?*

Because of the idolatrous apostasy and other criminal enormities of the people of Judah, and the severe judgments which God was prepared to inflict upon those who remained obstinate.

486. The captivity of Judah, together with a distant prospect of future favour and deliverance, form the subjects of the book of Jeremiah. An exception to this, however, is found in the 45th chapter, which relates to Baruch, and the six succeeding chapters, which regard the fortunes of some particular heathen nations. He foretold the fate of Zedekiah, the Babylonish captivity, the precise time of its duration, and the return of the Jews. He foreshowed the miraculous conception of Christ, the virtue of his atonement, the spiritual character, and the inward efficacy of his laws. His reputation has spread among many eastern nations, and heathen writers have borne testimony to his accurate historical descriptions.

487. *Why is the name of Jeremiah generally associated with a feeling of sadness?*

Because of the prevailing character of those prophecies

which it was his mission to declare to the Jews and other nations.

488. The word "Jeremiad" is hence derived. The book containing them is only second, however, in importance to that of Isaiah, which it follows. The language of Jeremiah is scarcely so grand as that of his great predecessor, but the reason of this may be that he is mostly taken up with the gentler passions of grief and pity, for the expression of which Jeremiah had a peculiar talent. He had an irresistible sympathy with the miserable, which found utterance in the most touching descriptions of their condition. His book of Lamentations is an astonishing exhibition of his power to accumulate images of sorrow. There can be no doubt, from the instance of Jeremiah, that God raises up particular minds for special works, to which they are by his providence specially adapted.

489. *Why did the ancients strew ashes upon their heads as a token of mourning?*

Because ashes have, from the earliest times, symbolized human frailty, deep humiliation, and mortality.

490. Not only from Genesis to the last book in the Bible, but throughout all ancient literature, we find the custom alluded to. Homer, Virgil, and Ovid frequently introduce the circumstance; to be unkempt, and to sprinkle dust upon the hair is, indeed, an universal emblem of a disturbed mind—the direct antithesis of joy, which is shown by washing and anointing the head.

RENDING THE GARMENTS.

Rending the garments had the same signification, and for the same reason, because nothing indicates a low or abject state, whether mentally or materially, than the appearance in torn or ragged garments. A person who should make his entry into a company in this guise would excite either pity or derision.

Rending the garments was sometimes expressive of a different kind o passion. In secular history we have many instances. Dion. Cassius relates that the consul Paulus rent his garments through indignation. Cæsar does the same when about to appease the multitude. Augustus rends his garment at the proposal of the dictatorship, and he is said to have done the same on hearing of the defeat of Varus

The *wearing of sackcloth* had a similar meaning, and was generally an accompaniment of the two preceding methods of expressing great grief or compunction. The term is derived from two purely Hebrew words, and has spread into all languages. The prophets were generally clothed in sackcloth. In times of great trouble, in penitence, the Jews universally put on sackcloth. The article itself was of a coarse black fabric, commonly made of hair. Hence, haircloth as worn by ascetics, and even kings, in the middle ages.

HISTORY OF JEREMIAH.

The name of this prophet signifies "raised up," or "appointed by God." He was the son of Hilkiah, a priest of Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin. Jeremiah was very young when the word of the Lord first came to him (Jer. i. 6). This event took place in the thirteenth year of Josiah (B. C. 629), whilst the youthful prophet still lived at Anathoth. It would seem that he remained in his native city several years; but at length, in order to escape the persecution of his fellow-townsmen, and even of his own family, as well as to have a wider field for his exertions, he went to Jerusalem. Encouraged by Jeremiah, King Josiah commenced numerous thorough reforms; he broke down the groves and the idols, and restored the true worship. He ordered large repairs of the temple to be carried out, and the money, which the priests had diverted to their own uses, to be given to the workmen. During the progress of these repairs, a copy of the law of Moses was found in the temple by Hilkiah the priest, and Shaphan the scribe, who brought it to Josiah. The king, greatly moved by a perusal of this document, sought to enforce its precepts upon his wayward people. The effect, whatever it might be, was but transient, and upon the death of Josiah it was totally obliterated. His successor, Jehoiakim, was a man of a different stamp. He had been upon the throne but a few days, when the apostate priests and people were emboldened to seize the person of Jeremiah, to lead him before the tribunals, and to demand his blood in return for the denunciations which he, as a prophet of Jehovah, had been commissioned to deliver.

It appears, however, that it was owing to the personal influence of one or two of the king's councillors rather than to any feeling generally favourable to Jeremiah on the part of the king, that his life was preserved. He was thrust into prison, or, as he says (Jer. xxxvi. 5), "shut up," and obliged to continue his denunciations through the medium of a deputy. This deputy he found in the prophet Baruch, who wrote the predictions from Jeremiah's dictation, and then intrepidly read them in public to the Jews upon the fast-day. But the conduct of Baruch was not long in exciting the anger of Jehoiakim; and Jeremiah, who had obtained his liberty, was, with his scribe, advised to hide himself.

The writings of Jeremiah, and which Baruch had publicly read, were procured by the king, and by him publicly burnt. Upon which occasion the Scripture narrative adds, "and the king and all his servants and the priests were not afraid, nor did they rend their garments." In fact, they had become case-hardened. The following year Nebuchadnezzar came with his army, and Jehoiakim heading a sally of the garrison lost his life, and his dead body lay as Jeremiah had predicted, "rotten, and cast forth without the gates of Jerusalem."

The Assyrian army under Nebuchadnezzar was, in consequence of a diversion from the side of Egypt, withdrawn from Judea, but returned again in three months.

B.C. 629—580.—The Captivity in Babylon.

Meantime, Jehoiachin, a son of the late king, had been proclaimed, but immediately submitted to the Assyrians; spite of which, he was deposed by Nebuchadnezzar, and replaced by Zedekiah his brother. The principal inhabitants of Jerusalem were now led away into Babylon, and the seventy years' captivity commenced. The Jews felt humbled and weakened, but their pride was still too strong to allow them to bear the notion of being subject to Babylon. A revolt was meditated; Jeremiah was consulted, to learn what might be its probable issue. True to his mission, the prophet forbade them to hope for success, but bade them humble themselves before God. This advice was regarded as an insult. Jeremiah was looked upon as a traitor, and cast into prison.

An incident occurred at this juncture which illustrates the character of the Hebrew king and people. Before the revolt, to give his policy the appearance of a religious act, Zedekiah made a solemn covenant with God to keep his laws, and the princes set all their brethren free who had become slaves from debt. The King of Egypt, by a tacit agreement with Zedekiah, appeared before the Assyrian camp, which caused Nebuchadnezzar for a moment to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Hereupon Zedekiah, making sure that the Assyrians would never return, and thinking that now he and his people were no longer in danger from them, seized upon their released bondsmen, and abandoned all their promises and covenants. Of course the enemy returned; and when once more they saw that Nebuchadnezzar was upon them, they could comfort themselves in no other way than by ordering Jeremiah to be cast into a pit, to die of starvation. The end of Zedekiah is known. A captive in Babylon, he was condemned to witness the mutilation and death of his two sons, to be followed by his own. He died in Babylon, B.C. 580.

Notwithstanding the sentence of Zedekiah, Jeremiah survived to behold the sad fulfilment of all his darkest predictions. He witnessed all the horrors of the famine, and when that had done its work, the triumph of the enemy. He saw the strongholds of Zion cast down, the palace of Solomon, the temple of God, with all its courts, its roofs of cedar and of gold, levelled to the earth, or committed to the flames, and the sacred vestments and vessels pillaged by profane hands. What were the feelings of a patriotic and religious Jew at that tremendous crisis, he has left on record in his unrivalled elegies, which combine the truth of history with the deepest pathos of poetry.

No sooner were the words of Jeremiah justified by the judgment that came on Jerusalem, than the remnant which remained behind assembled to consult him whether they should stay in Judea or go down to Egypt. Jeremiah answered them from God, that whoever should stay peaceably in Judea, subject to the Chaldeans, would save his life; but whoever should go down to Egypt should die there by the sword of the Chaldeans. The people to whom he gave this answer again accused him of being a traitor, and elected to go to Egypt, and to take Jeremiah with them. In Egypt, Jeremiah had good occasion to renew his denunciations. He found the scattered Jews there given up to all the abominations of the heathen, and accordingly warned them of the anger of God. The general tenor of their reply may be summed up in their own words, "As for the word thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken to thee." With this ended the prophet's ministry. He appears to have died of grief during the captivity in Egypt.

B.C. 629—580.—The Prophet Ezekiel.

491. *What are the Lamentations?*

They are the work of the prophet Jeremiah, and deplore, in a series of pathetic strains, the accomplishment of those prophecies already uttered by him.

492. The Lamentations were written in metre, and consist of plaintive effusions, composed upon the plan of the funeral dirges, all upon the same subject, and uttered as they rose in the mind of the prophet. They were subsequently arranged as we at present see them. The Lamentations are naturally divided into five parts, each of which is a distinct elegy, consisting of twenty-two periods, corresponding with the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. In the first four elegies the several periods commence, as an acrostic, with the different letters following each other in alphabetical order. In the first, second, and fourth elegy, Jeremiah addresses the people in his own person, or else personifies Jerusalem, and introduces that city as a character; the third part is supposed to be uttered by a chorus of Jews, represented by their leader; and in the fifth, the whole nation of the Jews, on being led into captivity, pour forth their united complaints to Almighty God. The Lamentations were written subsequently to the subversion of the kingdom of Judah.

493. *Why was the prophet Ezekiel raised up?*

For a purpose very similar to that of his contemporary Jeremiah.

494. Ezekiel was carried away captive to Babylon with Jehoiachin, King of Judah (B.C. 598), and was placed, with many others of his countrymen, upon the river Chebar, in Mesopotamia, where he was favoured with the divine revelations contained in his book.

This book may be considered under the five following divisions:—The first three chapters describe the glorious appearance of God to the prophet, and his solemn appointment to his office, with instructions and encouragements for the discharge of it. From the fourth to the twenty-fourth inclusive, he describes, under a variety of visions and similitudes, the calamities impending over Judea, and the total destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, occasionally predicting another period of still greater desolation and more general dispersion (the final siege and fall of Jerusalem under Titus). From the beginning of the twenty-fifth to the end of the thirty-second chapter, the prophet foretells the conquest and ruin of many nations and cities, which had insulted the Jews in their affliction; of the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Edomites, and Philistines; of Tyre, of Sidon, and Egypt; all of which were to be punished by the same mighty instrument of God's wrath (the Romans). From the thirty-second to the fortieth chapter, he inveighs against the accumulated sins of the Jews collectively, and the murmuring spirit of his captive brethren; exhorts them earnestly to repent of their hypocrisy and wickedness, upon the assurance that God will accept sincere repentance; and comforts them with promises of approaching deliverance under Cyrus, subjoining intimations of some far more glorious, but distant, redemption under the Messiah, though the manner in which it is to be effected is deeply involved in mystery. The last nine chapters contain a remarkable vision of the

structure of a new temple and a new polity, applicable, in the first instance, to the return from the Babylonian captivity, but in its ultimate sense referring to the glory and prosperity of the universal church of Christ. It ought also to be observed, that the last twelve chapters of this book bear a very strong resemblance to the concluding chapters of the "Revelation."

495. *Why is the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning Egypt remarkable?*

Because it is within the power of the most ordinary observer to test its complete fulfilment.

This prophecy is as follows:—"I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked; and I will make the land waste and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it."

"Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt. It shall be the basest of the nations, neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. The young men of Aven and Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword, and these cities shall go into captivity." (Chapters xxix. xxx.)

The kingdom of Egypt, of which the prophet spoke thus, was at the time a rival of the kingdom of Assyria, excelling in learning, and commerce, and manufactures. Its temples and priests were famous all over the world; its armies were well appointed; and, to all appearance, nothing was less likely than the accomplishment of this prophecy. And yet it has been literally fulfilled. Assyria subdued it, and afterwards it became subject to the Ptolemies—Greek adventurers, who settled in it, and kept the people in subjection. Then it became a Roman province. Next it passed under the Arabian caliphs, and now it is a pachalic of the Turkish empire. The condition of the inhabitants is so degraded, that, in the country which was formerly the granary of the world, there are not now more than a couple of villages where the people know how to make bread.

The ruins of its temples and idols are still standing, but the present inhabitants know nothing of their history.

496. *Why is the book of Daniel so called?*

Because it contains an account of those years of the Babylonian captivity with which the acts and prophecies of Daniel are connected.

497. *Who was Daniel?*

He was one of the children of the captivity (B.C. 605), taken at an early age into the household of Nebuchadnezzar.

498. The book of Daniel states that, in the third year of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, came and besieged Jerusalem; that he took the city, sacking it, and conveying away a portion of the sacred vessels from

the temple, "which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god;" that moved by the beauty and intelligence of the Jewish children, he chose to order certain of them to be taken to his palace, and educated in all the learning and science of the Chaldeans. Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These youths, however, had from their earliest days been faithful to the laws of God, and now refused to be defiled with the meats from the king's table, knowing that they had been offered to idols. God gave them great wisdom, and inclined the hearts of their masters towards them; and their wit and penetration was such, that they were serviceable to Nebuchadnezzar in the difficult affairs of his kingdom. In the second year of his reign this king had a dream of such a nature that his spirit was terrified, and notwithstanding its evident importance, the particulars of it went from his mind. His soothsayers and divining men are applied to to reveal the dream and its interpretation; but these conjurors are at fault. If the king will tell them his dream, they will undertake to interpret it; but this Nebuchadnezzar cannot do, and their remonstrances are met by the most terrible threats.

499. *How did these threats concern Daniel and his companions?*

They had been ranked with the magicians and astrologers, all of whom were included in the anger of Nebuchadnezzar.

500. Daniel, hearing of the cruel command of the king, ordering the magicians to be put to death, went to Arioch, the general of the army, and requested time to solve the question, and declare it to the king. He then returned to his house, and told the matter to his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, bidding them to ask the mercy of the God of heaven concerning the secret. The same night this was revealed to Daniel; he returned thanks to God, and both revealed and interpreted the king's dream. (See paragraph 559—note.)

501. *Why were the three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego thrown into the fiery furnace?*

Because they refused to bow down and worship a golden image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

502. The occasion of this erection was, that Daniel, having been advanced to a high post in reward for his revelation from God to the king, and, as the king's confidential officer, and having revealed the tricks and impostures of the idol priests, they plotted against him. They represented that the king was being converted from the worship of the national idols to that of the God of Israel, which induced Nebuchadnezzar, as a proof of his orthodoxy, to set up the golden image.

503. *Why were the Hebrew children enabled to pass through the fire scatheless?*

Because they were protected miraculously by God, who

sent an angel from heaven to shield them, and diffuse a cool atmosphere around them, even in the midst of the furnace.

504. *Why was Nebuchadnezzar deprived of his reason, and made to dwell with the beasts of the field?*

Because he had in his pride exalted himself to be worshipped as a god.

505. But although this king was punished by the loss of his senses, and his reduction to the level of a brute beast, it would appear that this calamity was the means of his ultimate conversion. His last words, recorded in chapter iv., would seem to indicate that, having regained his reason, he ended his life in the observance of the worship of the true God.

506. *What was the occasion of the handwriting on the wall which appeared to Belshazzar?*

That impious prince and grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, having, at a royal feast, used the sacred vessels which had been carried away from the temple, God sent this terrible indication of his impending punishment.

507. The wisdom of the Chaldean soothsayers being totally incompetent to interpret this mysterious handwriting, Daniel is called, and by the illumination of Jehovah he reads and explains its meaning. Scarcely, however, has this interpretation been proclaimed, than the fulfilment of the prophecy follows. Belshazzar had been informed by Daniel that God had numbered his days and ended them—that he had been weighed in the balances and found wanting—that his kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and Persians, "and the same night Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom." (Dan. v. 26—31.)

508. *Why was Daniel thrown into the den of lions?*

Because, having been advanced by Darius and being a Jew, the Medes were jealous of him and invented a plot to ruin him.

509. Daniel had revealed to King Darius some tricks and impostures of the idol priests, who were, in consequence, greatly incensed against him. They and their confederates, therefore, procured from Darius an order concerning worship, which they well knew, Daniel, as a Jew, would disobey; thus they would be able to show the king that he was no loyal subject, but a contemner of the royal decrees.

510. *Why could not Darius, upon convicting Daniel of this act of disobedience, relieve him of the penalty?*

Because it was a maxim with the Medes and Persians that all laws promulgated under the king's seal were irreversible.

B.C. 530.—Remarkable Prophecies.

511. The penalty provided for the crime was the being cast alive into a den of lions. However much Darius might wish to exempt Daniel from this punishment, he dared not openly go against the usages of the realm, especially in favour of one who was an alien and one of a despised nation.

512. *How was Daniel preserved from the lions?*

He was again miraculously protected. God sent an angel who shut the mouths of the lions.

513. The penalty had been inflicted, and the honour of the king saved. The latter now, punishing the accusers of his favourite servant, advanced him still higher in honours: "So Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian." (Dan. vi. 28.)

514. *Why are the prophecies of Daniel, with which the last six chapters of his book concludes, particularly interesting?*

Because, although they point to the coming of the Messiah, in common with those of several of the other prophets, they are distinguishable from them inasmuch as they indicate the very time and date of his appearing.

515. Daniel determines the time of His coming in two ways:—1. By describing the four empires which were to precede Him; and 2. By fixing the actual date, from a particular event in the Jewish history. It is a noteworthy fact, that because the times thus clearly fixed by Daniel are now gone by, and the Messiah (of their imagination) not having appeared, the later Rabbins have been driven to reject the authority of Daniel, whom they now, in revenge, declare to have been no true prophet.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

516. *Why was the prophet Hosea sent to the Jews?*

To supply the place of the prophet Amos when the latter had been banished from Israel to the kingdom of Judah.

517. Although placed before the prophecy of Amos in the order of the Biblical books, Hosea was later in point of time. He is reckoned the first of the Lesser Prophets; which word Lesser does not apply to the importance of the matter communicated, but to the length of the books which contain the prophecies.

Hosea, Joel, and Amos were contemporaries, living in the reigns of Jeroboam,

the son of Joash, king of Israel, and Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah kings of Judah.

The prophets were not only messengers sent, but were, in most instances, types in their own persons of the prophecies themselves. Their names were sometimes very significant of the motive of their office; as, for instance, Hosea signifies "a saviour," and implied that his message was a means by which salvation might be brought to the Jews, if they chose to hearken to it. Or their acts and behaviour were so many *acted allegories* of what was afterwards to happen.

518. *How is this statement illustrated in the prophecy of Hosea?*

In the commencement of the book (i. 2), the prophet is told to take to wife a woman who was known to have sinned against the law, in order to show by an allegory how Israel had allied itself to the corruptions of heathendom.

519. The book of Hosea is a series of reproaches against the people of Israel for their unfaithfulness to Jehovah and his laws, mingled with prophecies of their punishment, and, finally, of the coming of the Messiah. The priests generally had gone with their kings, and made no scruple in offering up sacrifices to any or every idol which the ever varying heresy of the day brought into fashion. Hosea's warning, addressed to these, shows how they ought to have instructed the people, and how God would visit them for their neglect of duty. The prophet next addresses himself to the people, and warns them not to trust in the calf of Bethel, nor in the help of either Egypt or Assyria. He then predicts their long servitude and captivity in Assyria, and the book concludes with some references to the future Christian system.

520. *Why was the prophet Joel sent from God?*

His mission was similar to that of Hosea; the scene of his preaching being the kingdom of Judah, while that of the former was Israel.

521. The name of Joel signifies "the Lord God," or "the coming down of God." The book containing his prophecies is very short, consisting of three chapters only; but these are full of the most sublime imagery, and are of a most solemn character. Of his person little is known. He was the son of Pethuel, and prophesied before the subversion of Judah, but when that event was fast approaching—in the reign, as some think, of Manasseh; or, according to others, of Josiah.

522. *Why was the prophet Amos sent?*

Because of the general corruption which had fallen upon Israel through the conduct of the first king Jeroboam in setting up the false worship in Bethel and in Dan.

523. Amos commenced his difficult ministry by speaking against the idolatrous altars. The first six chapters are occupied with these exhortations. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, hereupon sent to Jeroboam II., king of Israel, saying:—"Amos

hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear his words." He represents that his prophecy of the king's death is an act of treason, and deserving of banishment at the least. Amos defends his conduct. He was not a prophet strictly speaking; he had been but a simple herdsman. While with his cattle, the message of the Lord had come to him, and he had no alternative but to deliver it. His remonstrance had but little effect. Amos was banished the kingdom, and took refuge in Judah.

524. *Who was the prophet Obadiah?*

He was a contemporary of Amos, Hosea, and Joel, and was sent for a similar purpose.

525. The prophecy of Obadiah is the shortest of all the Lesser Prophets, but yields to none in the sublimity of its subject and diction.

526. *Why are the person and prophecy of Jonah particularly interesting?*

Because the prophet was a remarkable type of Jesus Christ, and is referred to as such by our Saviour himself.

527. Jonah lived in the time of the second Jeroboam (2 Kings xiv. 25), to whom he foretold his success in restoring the borders of Israel. He was of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulon, and consequently of Galilee. This is important to remember, as confuting the assertion of the Pharisees (John vii. 52) that *no prophet ever rose out of Galilee*. He was the only one among the prophets who was sent to preach to the Gentiles.

528. *Why did Jonah, when sent to Nineveh to denounce judgment against it, fly to Tarshish "from the face of the Lord"?*

Because, knowing the mercy and long-suffering of God for those who repent, and foreseeing that the repentance of the Ninevites would avert from their city its threatened destruction, he feared to be reputed as a false prophet.

529. Jonah's flight obliged him to take ship at Joppa. No sooner is he aboard and the vessel under weigh, than the pursuing hand of God raises a great wind, by which the crew and passengers are tossed about to the peril of their lives. The mariners are terrified. Most probably there was something of an unusual character in the force and violence of the tempest. They cry out to heaven—they throw overboard the heavy goods, but in vain; the storm continues—Jonah is found asleep in the midst of this peril, and he, being awakened, is asked why he does not rise and call upon his God. But the impression has got hold of these mariners that some person is on board whose presence is an offence to God, and is the cause of their peril. To discover who this might be lots are cast, "and the lot fell upon Jonah." He is asked his name, his country, and his errand. Being informed of these they endeavour once more to row to land. But this is useless, the storm still

rages fiercely, and, against their will, they throw Jonah into the sea. A calm immediately ensues, and the men acknowledge the power of God—"They offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows."

530. *Why was Jonah swallowed by a great fish?*

Because it was the purpose of God thus miraculously to preserve him alive, that he might afterwards fulfil his mission to the Ninevites.

531. Accordingly, after three days, God caused the fish to approach the land and to deposit the prophet upon it unscathed. He now proceeds upon his errand, and by the earnestness of his warnings awakens the Ninevites to a temporary repentance; which has the effect anticipated by Jonah. The anger of God is turned away, and they are pardoned.

532. *Why was Jonah displeased "and very angry"* (iv. 1) *that God should spare Nineveh?*

Because, 1, he expected now to be reputed as a false prophet; 2, he feared that God's word, by this occasion, might come to be slighted and disbelieved.

533. *Why did the gourd spring up so rapidly over Jonah's booth, and as rapidly disappear?*

To show the prophet that all things were in the hand of God, and that He could do whatsoever He pleased with His creatures.

534. After the delivery of his warning against Nineveh, Jonah betook himself to a booth in the environs; or, in the words of the text (Jonah iv. 5), "He made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city." God caused a gourd (or kind of *Palma christi*, according to some commentators) to spring up miraculously, which afforded a thick shelter over the booth of the prophet. Jonah rejoiced in his gourd. But as rapidly as it had grown, so, by means of a worm which was sent to attack it, did it as rapidly wither. This was a new grief to Jonah. He gives vent to his complaint that God had deprived him of his sheltering plant. God then convinces the prophet of his narrow-mindedness, inasmuch as he could mourn for the withering of a gourd, but had no feeling for the thousands of men, women, and children, whom God had spared in Nineveh.

535. *At what period did the prophet Micah live?*

He was a Morasthite, or native of Moresheth, a small town of Judah, a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah, and was sent to preach in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (B.C. about 750).

536. He is not to be confounded with the Micaiah mentioned in 1 Kings xxii., who lived a hundred and fifty years before. Micah's prophecies were chiefly

concerning Samaria, although he had to denounce the anger of God against Jerusalem, whose destruction he foreshows, even descending to the particular fate which befel Mount Zion many hundred years afterwards. He speaks of the ploughing up of its site, which actually occurred under the Roman emperors. His references to the coming Messiah are remarkable in that he mentions the very birth-place of Jesus Christ. That memorable passage—"But thou BETHLEHEM Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting"—occurs in chapter v. verse 2 of Micah's prophecy. The style of this book is characterized as forcible, pointed, and concise, always poetical, sometimes sublime. Micah is full of feeling, and his prophecies are penetrated by the purest spirit of morality and piety.

537. *What was the object of Nahum's prophecy?*

He was sent during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, after the irruption of the Assyrians into that kingdom had commenced, to warn his countrymen of God's anger and the consequences of their sins. He predicted the fatal end of that invasion—the captivity of the Jews—and the destruction of Nineveh itself.

538. He appeared about fifty years after Jonah, when the Ninevites had relapsed. The destruction of Nineveh was declared as a foreshadowing of the subversion of idolatry by the establishment of Christianity. The name of Nahum signifies "a comforter." He is described as "the Elkoshite," from the place of his birth, which, according to St. Jerome, was Helkesi, a little town of Galilee. Nahum was, therefore, another proof of the falsehood of the Pharisees' declaration concerning that province.

539. *Why was the prophet Habakkuk sent from God?*

He was sent to warn the kingdom of Judah of the invasion of the Chaldeans (B.C. about 600).

540. Habakkuk lived to see this prediction fulfilled; and many years after, according to the general opinion, foreseeing that Nebuchadnezzar would take Jerusalem, he escaped, on the approach of the Chaldean army, to Astracin, a town in Arabia, near Lake Sarbonis. When the Chaldeans returned to their own country after the conquest of Jerusalem, Habakkuk came back to Judea, and died (B.C. 538) two years before the return of the Jews from Babylon. Psuedo Epiphanius says he was honourably buried at his native city, Beth-socher, in the tribe of Simeon. In the prayer (Hab. iii.), the appearance of Christ, the last judgment, and eternity are mentioned in the most sublime style.

541. *Who was Zephaniah?*

He was a prophet sent in the beginning of the reign of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah (B.C. about 630), to

denounce the sins of the Jews—their idolatry and other crimes —and to foreshow to them the punishments that were to come upon them and upon other nations for the same causes.

542. Zephaniah, whose name signifies "the watchman of the Lord," was the son of Cushi, a Simeonite, and a native of Mount Sarabatha, an elevated region of Lebanon. His style is not so grand as that of most other prophets, but this only shows that God calls whom he pleases, and uses instruments of various kinds and accomplishments. Notwithstanding this, the authenticity of the book of Zephaniah has never been called in question.

543. *Why was the prophet Haggai sent?*

Because his being a message of mercy and encouragement, and occurring after the return from the captivity of Babylon, he was a means to stimulate the children of Israel and Judah in the rebuilding of their temple.

544. Haggai was probably born at Babylon, or in some other town of the Babylonian empire to which the captive Jews had been consigned. It is not known where he died. There has never been any doubt about the authenticity of this book. Its prophecies are referred to in Ezra iv. 24, and there is a quotation of Haggai ii. 7 in Hebrews xii. 26. The prophecies were all most strikingly fulfilled. In the rebuilding of their second temple, the Jews had been much annoyed by their rivals the Samaritans. In consequence, however, of the exhortations of Haggai, they proceeded with the building, and finished it. Among the encouragements offered to the Jews, the prophet was commanded to assure them that this second temple should be more glorious than the first, because the Messiah should honour it with his presence; signifying, also, how much the church of the New Testament should excel that of the Old. That, in a material sense, the second temple was inferior to the first admits of no doubt. The seventh verse of the second chapter of this book clearly shows in what it should excel the former: "And I will shake all nations, and THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS SHALL COME, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord."

545. *What was the object of Zechariah's prophecy?*

It was intended, like that of Haggai, to stimulate the returned captives to rebuild the temple, and restore the regular worship of God; and to encourage their faith and hope with the promise of a Messiah.

546. Zechariah began to prophecy in the same year as Haggai. His prophecies are full of symbolism, and rather dark in their meanings; but, with reference to two subjects, he is plainer and more open than other prophets. These are the coming of Jesus Christ, and the last siege of Jerusalem. He lived nearer to those events than many of his fellows, and his references are proportionately clearer than theirs. In chapter ix. verse 9, is that remarkable passage, "Rejoice greatly, O

daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is just, and having salvation; *lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*" Wherein the actual appearance and equipage, so to speak, of our Saviour is delineated. In chapter xi. verse 12, the thirty pieces of silver for which our Lord was betrayed is mentioned; and in the 13th verse of the same chapter, their appropriation by the Jews in the purchase of the potter's field is alluded to.

With regard to the last siege and destruction of Jerusalem, the prophet, in chapter xi., is very minute, although still figurative. In verse 6, the final strife is mentioned—the factions who warred with each other—every one against his neighbour—tallying exactly with Josephus's description of the actual fact, as it afterwards occurred.

547. *Why is the book of the Prophecies of Malachi placed last among the canonical books?*

1. Because the subjects of his prophecies arrange themselves naturally in that place. 2. Because after him no prophet was recognized in Israel, or by Christians, until John the Baptist.

548. Malachi, whose name signifies "the angel of the Lord," was contemporary with Nehemiah, and by some is believed to have been the same person with Esdras. He was the last of the prophets in the order of time, and lived about four hundred years before Christ. He foretells the coming of Christ in a very striking manner; the reprobation of the Jews and their sacrifices; and the calling of the Gentiles, who shall offer up to God in every place an acceptable sacrifice, He also clearly speaks of the two-fold coming of Christ, preceded by the Baptist and by Elijah. He inveighs against the same crimes as Nehemiah, to whose covenant he alludes (Mal. ii. 4). The prophecy of Malachi respecting St. John the Baptist (Mal. iii. 1) has been considered, both by Jews and Christians, as one of the most remarkable and important in the whole Scriptures. The prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah were delivered during the building of the second temple; that of Malachi was given some years after its completion, when Nehemiah was "governor." The allusion in chapter i. verse 8, is evidently made to him. With Malachi the race of Old Testament prophets ceased. The Jews reckoned that this prophetical reign lasted only forty years after the completion of the second temple.

NOTE ON THE PERIOD OF THE LATER PROPHETS.

With the death of Malachi, the prophetical dispensation terminated. It will be important to observe what was going on in the nations immediately surrounding the devoted land of Judea.

In the year B.C. 335, Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia, passed out of Europe into Asia, and began to lay waste the Persian empire. Manasses, brother

to Jaddus, the high priest at Jerusalem, refusing to put away his strange wife, was driven from the sacrifice; and Sanballath, his father-in-law, governor of Samaria, having revolted from Darius, applied to the rising conqueror of the East for permission to erect a temple on Mount Gerizim. Alexander granted his request. The schismatical temple was erected, and Manasses made high priest thereof. To this new sanctuary now resorted all such as were entangled in unlawful marriage, and, in fact, all those who, not wishing to leave their own country entirely, were still not safe at Jerusalem. This was the origin of the hated Samaritan scandal.

ALEXANDER, SURNAMED THE GREAT.

Alexander marched to Jerusalem, intending to besiege it. Jaddus, the high-priest, hearing of his approach, arrays himself in his sacerdotal vestments, and, accompanied by a concourse of people all in white, goes out to meet him. This striking manifestation has its effect upon the impressible mind of the youthful Alexander, who at their approach prostrates himself, and, rising, informs the high priest that, whilst he was in Macedonia, a man appeared to him in the very same habit, who invited him to come into Asia, and promised to deliver the Persian empire into his hands. He then proceeds to the temple, and offers sacrifice to the God of heaven, according to the high priest's direction. He is shown the prophecy of Daniel, and, without much difficulty, is persuaded that he is the Greek destined to subvert the Persian dynasty.

The event verified this prediction, for, in B.C. 330, the Persians are overcome, Darius slain, and Alexander remains master of the whole eastern world. In B.C. 323, Alexander, having reigned six years and ten months, died; his army and dominions being divided between his principal generals. Antigonus becomes master of Asia; Seleucus of Babylon and the bordering nations; Lysimachus of the Hellespont; Cassander, Macedon; and Ptolomeus, Egypt.

GREEK HEATHEN PRIEST, WITH GOAT FOR SACRIFICE.

In B.C. 320, Ptolomeus Soter, by a stratagem, made himself master of Jerusalem. Entering the city upon the Sabbath, when he knew the Jews would be engaged in their sacrificial rites, under pretence of assisting at them, he captured it without resistance, and made the principal inhabitants captives. Ptolomeus sent many of these into Egypt, and here his enmity towards them terminated, for we find that he gave them special privileges, and placed great confidence in their wisdom and general integrity. At the death of this king, his son, Ptolomeus Philadelphus, reigned over Egypt; and being a great favourer of learning and learned men, he built the celebrated Alexandrine library. It was

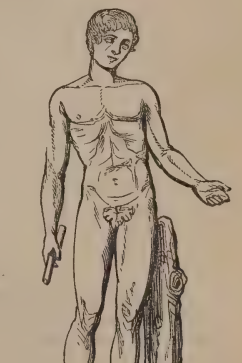
B.C. 277.—Greeks invade Judea.

by his direction and patronage that the invaluable Septuagint was composed (B.C. 277).

The succeeding events bring us to the period at which the distinguished family of the Maccabees flourished, and are interesting both from their own nature and as throwing a light upon the manners of the age and peoples of the East.

In the year B.C. 177, one Simon, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, was governor of the temple of Jerusalem, Onias being then high priest. Owing to some unexplained causes of quarrel, these functionaries nourish a hatred the one for the other; and the former, in order to further his revenge, goes to Apollonius, the governor of Cœlo-Syria, and informs him that there is a vast treasure hidden in the temple. Apollonius acquaints his sovereign, Seleucus, with this fact, and the latter sends Heliodorus, his treasurer, to Jerusalem to bring away the money. Heliodorus, entering the temple, is by angels struck down in the very place, and carried from thence half dead; but, by the prayers of Onias, he is soon after restored to health. Returning to his master Seleucus, Heliodorus magnifies the holiness of the temple, and the power of God dwelling in it.

The following year Seleucus died, and was succeeded on the throne of Syria by Antiochus Epiphanes. By means of some valuable presents, one Jason contrives to get appointed by him to the office of high priest: but Menelaus, brother to Simon the traitor, being employed by Jason to convey the bribe to Antiochus Epiphanes, contrives, by the offer of a higher sum, to get the high priesthood conferred upon himself. This imbroglio brings Jerusalem into trouble with the heathen; for Menelaus, once installed, fails to pay the stipulated price, and defies the king. Antiochus then marches to Jerusalem, besieges and takes it, slaughtering a vast number of its inhabitants, and selling into slavery many thousands of them. Not content with this revenge, Antiochus endeavours to abolish the Jewish worship and ceremonial; and it is worthy of remark, how futile every attempt to do this had hitherto failed, and was still doomed to fail. God had decreed a time for this consummation; and, until that time should arrive, the heathen might "enviously rage," but they would find themselves, in the words of the psalmist-prophet, imagining "a vain thing."



ADONIS, A HEATHEN GREEK IDOL.

Antiochus obtained nothing but some affectations of Greek usages. The temple worship remained intact; but the Samaritans, probably out of hatred to the Jews, and not from any conviction, set up the worship of Jupiter on Mount Gerizim.

It has been said that Antiochus gained nothing by his attempts to establish idolatry at Jerusalem. His attempts, however, were not easily foregone, and in their prosecution he contrived to deluge the holy city with blood. He issued an edict, commanding all the nations

subject to him to observe uniformity of worship; to lay aside all peculiar or national customs; to profess the Greek religion; the punishment of death being threatened unto such as should be disobedient. He set up the most severe and inexorable tribunals, presided over by judges of the most uncompromising character. Of the Jews, many preferred to undergo the most cruel torments, rather than offer sacrifice to idols. These persecutions, and the heroic resistance offered to Epiphanes, form the subject of the earlier portions of the books of Maccabees, and were coeval with the decline of the Greek power under the gradually rising star of Rome.

GREEK ALTAR.

CHAPTER VII.

APOCRYPHAL BOOKS.

549. *Why should the books called "Apocrypha" be read and considered?*

Because they afford, by way of episodes, excellent pictures of the sufferings and manners of the Jews during the period of which they treat.

I. THE HISTORY OF TOBIT.

Prophet after prophet had spoken to Israel, and neither king nor people had repented. By the permission of God, therefore, the empire of Assyria made war upon and prevailed against it. Among the captives whom Shalmanezer, King of Assyria, removed to Nineveh, was Tobit, of the city and tribe of Napthali. When still young, this devout Israelite had ever refused to bow to the idols which Jeroboam had set up at Dan and at Bethel, but went up regularly to offer his tithes and first-fruits in the temple at Jerusalem.

He married a wife of his own tribe, one Anna, and they had one son, who was also called Tobit. The elder Tobit prospered even in his captivity, and was permitted to go freely from city to city by Shalmanezer, who was favourable to him. In one of his journeys he encountered a countryman, by name Gabael, of Rages, a city of Media, who was in deep want, and Tobit advanced him as a loan

The History of Tobit.

the sum of ten talents, taking his written acknowledgment for the money. After the death of Shalmanezer, as had happened before in Egypt, another king arose who knew not Tobit, and a persecution of the captives commenced, which was very bitter and hard to bear. This change was mainly brought about by the defeat of Sennacherib before Jerusalem (B.C. 710). The captive Israelites became so many marks for the revengeful shafts of the humbled Assyrians. It was a common occurrence to stab them in the open streets, their bodies being left to be devoured by birds or the prowling dogs of Nineveh. The piety and patriotism of Tobit had herein an object for their exhibition. He seized every opportunity to sally forth, and render to the bodies of his compatriots the rites of sepulture. For a time he was enabled to do so without detection; but at length his acts were reported to the king, and he was marked for punishment. Tobit escaped assassination only through the death of Sennacherib, who was murdered by his own sons.

Undeterred by this risk, Tobit continued his pious offices to the dead, and, as in the case of Job, it pleased God to try His servant with affliction. By an accident he lost his sight; he next fell into poverty; and, it is added, his wife reproached him with the uselessness of his previous virtue and faith. But Tobit's reliance upon God was not to be shaken; he repined not, but set to work to provide succours in their distress. He remembered the debt owing to him by his friend Gabael in Rages, and despatched his son to that city to demand its payment. It was necessary that the young Tobit should, if possible, have the companionship of some discreet and trustworthy guide among the strange lands and people to which his errand would lead him. Opportunely enough, such a guide presented himself. This was a divinely sent personage, the angel Raphael, who, in the guise of a native of Persia, offered his services. The young Tobit and his conductor then set out, and, after various adventures, which it needs not to repeat here, they arrive at Rages, procure the money, return, and gladden the hearts of Tobit's parents. By the angel's help, the elder Tobit recovers his lost sight. The young man is well and happily married to a virtuous woman of his own nation, and it only remains to them to requite the services of the faithful guide, by whose means health, wealth, and domestic happiness had been restored to the pious family. They had blessed God for His goodness in sending them so invaluable a friend, but had no suspicion of his supernatural character. It was, indeed, a real trouble to find by what means an adequate recompense could be awarded to Azariah—such was the assumed name of Tobit's guide. He was called, and desired to tell them by what means they could acquit themselves of the obligation; but now, his errand over, the angel revealed himself. He told them that, out of regard to his prayers and alms, God had commissioned him, Raphael, to descend to earth to heal him, and to restore his prosperity. For all this they were only to bless and adore God. The parting admonition of Raphael is beautiful, and is as follows:—

"*Peace be to you, fear not.*

"*For when I was with you, I was there by the will of God; bless ye Him, and sing praises to His name.*

"*I seemed to eat and drink with you; but I use an invisible meat and drink, which cannot be understood by men.*

"*It is time, therefore, that I return to Him that sent me; but bless ye God, and publish all his wonderful works.*"

Tobit and his family fell on their faces, and remained prostrate while the

angelic messenger vanished from their sight. Afterwards the spirit of prophecy fell upon the elder Tobit, and rising he foretold the future glory of Jerusalem, which is interpreted to mean the Christian church.

He afterwards lived many years, and saw the children of his grandchildren.

II. HISTORY OF JUDITH.

In the reign of Manasseh, King of Judah, the Assyrian monarch, Saos-duchinus (Nebuchadnezzar), sent his general, Holofernes, with a large army, to subdue the people and cities of Syria. The approach of this army struck such terror and dismay into the hearts of the Syrians, that they went out on all sides to meet him with garlands, lights, and dances, timbrels and flutes, if possible to appease his fierceness. Joacim, the high priest of Jerusalem, seeing the danger that threatened Judah in common with the other people, went through all the cities, exhorting the Jews to humble themselves in sackcloth and ashes before God, and to pray for the Divine protection, while the men of war prepared to defend their country. Holofernes, hearing that the children of Israel were thus arousing themselves to resistance against his power, full of amazement and indignation, called together the princes of Moab and Ammon, who had made their submission, and asked them, "What is this people that besetteth the mountains, that they alone have despised us, and not come out to meet us?" He received such an answer to this question from Achior, a prince of Ammon, as excited the Assyrian general to additional anger. From Achior he learned that the Jews were a distinct people; that their career had been one of wonders and prodigies; that they were the children of a high and sublime destiny; that if they were now in depression, it was the result of God's anger against them; that no weapon formed against them could prosper unless by the will of Heaven. If now they were serving God faithfully, Holofernes would in vain strive against them; with more to the same effect.

The Assyrian was so irritated, that he could scarcely refrain from killing Achior. He, however, contented himself with binding him hand and foot, and setting him outside the gates of Bethulia, an Israelitish town which he was besieging. The Bethulians rescued Achior, and learned from him the murderous intentions of Holofernes; but the siege was kept up, and distress began to fill the city. The hearts of the Jews failed them, as they saw the moment approach when they must inevitably fall a prey to the cruel Holofernes. A council of war was held, and it was agreed that, unless relief came, they would yield the city at the end of five days. At this juncture a help sprang up from an unexpected quarter. Judith, a widow of the city, heard of the despairing resolve, and sent to the council over whom Ozias the priest presided. "Who are ye," said she, "that thus tempt the Lord? This is not a word to draw down mercy, but indignation. You have set a time for the mercy of God, and have appointed Him a day according to your pleasure; let us rather humbly wait for His consolation." Ozias and the council recognized in Judith a special mission—a helper sent by God to whom it would be wise to defer. "All the words that thou hast spoken to us are true; now, therefore, pray for us, for thou art a holy woman, and one fearing God." Judith then said briefly that she and her maid would go to the Assyrian camp, but that they were not to search too curiously into her plans, and that nothing should be

Susanna and the Elders.

done but to pray for the success of them. Ozias answered, "Go in peace, and the Lord be with thee to take revenge of our enemies."

Judith returned home, and, going into her oratory, she put on sackcloth and covered her head with ashes; and she prayed before God, who had before humbled the Egyptians, who trusted in their chariots and horses, "that all nations may acknowledge that thou art God, and none other besides thee." Her prayer ended, Judith attired herself and went by night, with her maid carrying a basket of provisions, down the hill to the Assyrian camp. Early in the morning they met the watch of the enemy, who stopped them and demanded their errand. Judith answered that she was a daughter of the Hebrews, and that she had fled from the city knowing that it must fall; that wishing to save her own life, she was come into their camp, and, moreover, that she had secret intelligence to give to Holofernes how the city might be taken. She was accordingly introduced to the tent of the Assyrian general, to whom she repeated her story. Holofernes was greatly smitten with the beauty and majesty of the Jewish matron, and gave orders that she should for three days have free passage to and from the camp. At the end of that time he gave a great supper to his officers, and invited Judith to grace the banquet with her presence. This she consented to do, provided she was not compelled to touch the food of the Assyrians, but was allowed, as a Hebrew, to eat from the basket of her attendant. At this banquet Holofernes became so exceedingly merry, that at its end he sank to the floor and slept the sleep of drunkenness. Judith at length found herself alone with the heathen general. She told her maid to stand before the chamber and watch. Then praying with tears for the assistance of God, she took down the sword of Holofernes from the pillar where it hung, and seizing him by the hair struck him twice and cut off his head.

In the morning, Judith stood before the walls of Bethulia, her maid carrying the head of Holofernes in her bag. "Open the gates," cried Judith, "for God is with us!" There was no time to be lost in seizing the occasion which God had given them. The head of Holofernes was hung out upon the walls of the city, and every preparation was made for one bold and vigorous sally upon the Assyrian camp at the moment of their panic. Everything happened as had been foreseen by Judith. The dismay of the Assyrians on finding the headless trunk of their general was extreme. In the midst thereof, the impetuous onset of the Hebrews completed the panic; they fled in all directions, and the siege was raised. Immense numbers were slain, and all the spoils of the army fell into the hands of the children of Israel.

III. THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA.

Susanna,* the wife of a rich Jew of Babylon, is, while in a garden attached to her own house, solicited to commit adultery by two elders or judges of the Jewish people: and although she foresees that her opposition to their wicked intentions will be followed by some revengeful acts on their part, she is enabled by her religious principles successfully to resist them. The judges, or elders, enraged at the repulse, call Susanna before a public assembly and testify that they caught her in the act of adultery in the garden. She is condemned to death for the offence. As the innocent victim is on the way to execution, Daniel, who seems to have had a knowledge of the cha-

* Signifying a lily—the type of chastity.

racter of these wicked judges from some extraneous source, induces the people to institute a fresh examination of the evidence against her. He interrogates the elders separately, under what tree, or in what part of the garden they found the supposed adultress. The first answering that it was under a mastick tree, or lentisk tree, Daniel immediately pronounces his sentence in the words, "The angel of the Lord hath received the sentence to cut thee in two." The other answering that it was under an ilex tree, he condemns him by saying, "The angel of God waiteth to destroy thee." The people confirm the sentence of Daniel, and these false witnesses, who had been at once accusers and judges, are executed in conformity with the laws of retaliation.

The History of Susanna, although reckoned among the deutero-canonical books by both Protestants and Catholics, is much esteemed by both Churches. In the Anglican Liturgy it occurs as a lesson on the 22nd of November; and in the Roman on the vigil of the fourth Sunday in Lent. Susanna is much quoted, and was a favourite subject with the old Italian painters.

IV. THE HISTORY OF BEL AND THE DRAGON.

Daniel,* on being invited by the King of Babylon to worship the idol Bel, pledges himself to prove that the idol does not consume the food set before him in large quantities. With this view, as soon as the food has been deposited, he orders every one to depart from the temple, and sprinkles the pavement with ashes, shuts the door and seals it with the royal signet. Early in the morning, the king and Daniel open the doors and enter the temple. They find the food consumed it is true, but at the same time discover in the ashes on the pavement the footsteps of the priests and of their wives and children, who had entered the temple at night by a secret door and devoured the food. On this account the king orders the idol Bel, which was made of earthenware overlaid with gold, to be broken in pieces.

Daniel, again importuned by the king to adore a Dragon, who is represented as an object of worship at Babylon, replies that he will undertake, unarmed, to destroy this supposed terrible deity. With the king's permission he offers the Dragon food prepared "of pitch, and fat, and hair seethed together," which the Dragon devours and immediately bursts asunder. The populace are excited by these outrages upon their gods, and rising tumultuously force the king to give up Daniel. The seditious multitude having cast him to the lions, he nevertheless remains unhurt, and on the sixth day receives food from Habakkuk, who had been supernaturally brought to his relief from a great distance, and who was taken back again to his home in a similar manner. The king, at last, finding Daniel unhurt, releases him and punishes his persecutors.

V. THE TWO BOOKS OF MACCABEES.

The Maccabees commenced their career of patriotic and religious heroism during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, about the year B.C. 167. At this time the aged Mattathias, a descendant of the Asmonæans, and his five sons,

* The period of the history is the same with that of Susanna, namely, during the Babylonish captivity.

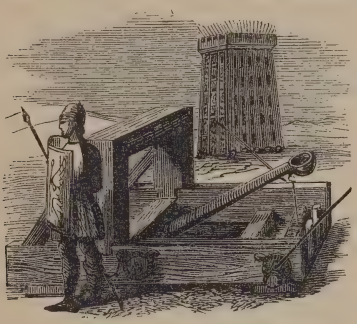
inhabited the town of Modin, to which place Antiochus sent certain of his officers with instructions to erect an altar for heathen sacrifices, and to engage the inhabitants in the celebration of idolatrous and superstitious rites. The venerable Mattathias openly declared his resolution to oppose the orders of the tyrant, and one of the recreant Jews approaching the altar which had been set up, he rushed upon him, and slew him with his own hand. His part thus boldly taken, he called his sons and his friends around him, and immediately fled to the mountains, inviting all to follow him who had any zeal for God and the law. A small band of resolute and devoted men was thus formed, and the governor of the district saw reason to fear that a general insurrection would be the consequence of their proceeding. By a sudden attack directed against them on the Sabbath, when he knew the strictness of their principles would not allow them to take measures for their defence, he threw them into disorder, and slew about a thousand of their number, consisting of men, women, and children. Warned by this event, and yielding to the necessity of their present condition, Mattathias and his sons determined that for the future they would defend themselves on the Sabbath in the same manner as on other days. The mountain-hold of the little band was now guarded more cautiously than before. Fresh adherents to the holy cause were continually flocking in; and in a few months the party found itself sufficiently strong to make attacks upon the towns and villages of the neighbourhood, throwing down the heathen altars, and punishing the reprobates who had taken part with the enemies of God.

By the death of Mattathias, the leadership of the party devolved upon his son Judas Maccabæus, whose worth and heroic courage pointed him out as most capable of carrying on the enterprise thus nobly begun. Judas lost no time in attacking the enemy. He made himself master of several towns, which he fortified and garrisoned. Apollonius, general of the army in Samaria, hastened to stop the progress of the insurgents. Judas met him on the way, joined battle with him, slew him, and routed his army. The same success attended him in his encounter with Seron, general of the Syrians; and it now became evident to Antiochus that the Jewish nation would soon be delivered from his yoke, unless he proceeded against them with a more formidable force. While, therefore, he himself went into Persia to recruit his treasures, Lysias, whom he left as regent at home, sent an army into Judea, composed of forty thousand foot and seven thousand cavalry. This powerful array was further increased by auxiliaries from the provinces, and by bands of Jews, who dreaded nothing more than the triumph of those virtuous men of their own nation who were struggling to save it from reprobation. So unequal did the forces of Judas appear to an encounter with such an army, that in addressing his followers he urged those among them who had any especial reason to love the present world to retire at once; while to those that remained he pointed out the promises of God as the best support of their courage and fidelity. By a forced march he reached a portion of the enemy encamped at Emmaus, while utterly unprepared for his approach. Complete success attended this bold proceeding. The several parts of the hostile army were successively put to flight, a splendid booty was secured, and Judas gained a position which made even the most powerful of his opponents tremble. Another and more numerous army was sent against him the following year, but with no better success. At the head of ten thousand determined followers, Judas defeated the army of Lysias, consisting of sixty thousand. A way was thereby opened for his progress to Jerusalem, whither he

B.C. 167—34.—The Maccabees.

immediately hastened, with the devout purpose of purifying the temple and restoring it to its former glory. The solemn religious rites having been performed which were necessary to the cleansing of the sacred edifice, the festival of the purification was instituted and added to the number of the other national festivals of more ancient date.

Judas had full occupation for his courage and ability in repelling the incursions of those numerous foes who dreaded the restoration of order and religion. But every day added to his successes. Having overthrown the Syrian commander sent against him, he occupied Samaria, made himself master of the strong city of Hebron, of Azotus, and other important places, taking signal vengeance on the people of Joppa and Jamnia, who had treacherously plotted the destruction of numerous Jews.



BALISTA FOR HURLING HUGE STONES, AND MOVEABLE TOWER.

Antiochus Epiphanes was succeeded by Antiochus Eupator. At first this prince acted towards the Jews with moderation and tolerance; but he soon afterwards invaded Judea with a powerful army, and was only induced to make peace with Maccabæus by the fears he entertained of a rival aspirant to the throne. His caution did not save him. He was put to death by his own uncle, Demetrius, who, obtaining the throne of Syria, made peace with Judas, but took possession of the citadel of Jerusalem, which was occupied by his general, Nicanor, and a body of troops. This state of things was not allowed to last long, Demetrius listened to the reports of Nicanor's enemies, and threatened to deprive him of his command unless he could disprove the accusation that he had entered into a league with Judas, and was betraying the interests of his sovereign. Nicanor immediately took measures to satisfy Demetrius, and Judas saw it necessary to escape from Jerusalem and put himself in a posture of defence. A battle took place in which he defeated his enemy. Another was soon after fought at Beth-horon, where he was again victorious. Nicanor himself fell in this battle, and his head and right hand were sent among the spoils to Jerusalem. But the forces of Demetrius were still numerous. Judas had retired to Laish with about three thousand followers. He was there attacked by overwhelming numbers. Only eight hundred of his people remained faithful to him on this occasion. Resolved not to flee, he bravely encountered the enemy, and was speedily slain, regarding his life as a fitting sacrifice to the cause in which he was engaged.

Simon and Jonathan, the brothers of Judas, rallied around them the bravest of their companions, and took up a strong position in the neighbourhood of Tekoa. Jonathan proved himself a worthy successor to his heroic brother, and skilfully evaded the first attack of Bacchides, the Syrian general. For two years after this the brothers were left in tranquillity, and they established themselves in a little fortress called Bethtasi, situated among the rocks near Jericho. The skill and reso-

lution with which they pursued their measures rendered them formidable to the enemy, and the state of affairs in Syria some time after obliged Demetrius to make Jonathan the general of his forces in Judea, and to invest him with the authority of governor of Jerusalem. To this he was compelled by the rivalry of Alexander Balas; but his policy was too late to secure the attachment of his new ally. Jonathan received offers from Alexander to support his interests among the Jews, and the high priesthood was the proffered reward. The invitation was accepted, and Jonathan became the first of the Asmonean line, through which the high priesthood was so long transmitted. Alexander Balas left nothing undone which might tend to secure the fidelity of Jonathan. He gave him a high rank among the princes of his kingdom and adorned him with a purple robe. Jonathan continued to enjoy his prosperity till the year B.C. 143, when he fell a victim to the treachery of Tryphon who aspired to the Syrian throne. He was succeeded by his brother Simon, who confirmed the Jews in their temporary independence; and in the year B.C. 141, they passed a decree whereby the dignity of the high priesthood and of prince of the Jews was rendered hereditary in the family of Simon. He fell a victim to the treachery of his son-in-law Ptolemy, governor of Jericho, but was succeeded by his son the celebrated John Hyrcanus, who possessed the supreme authority above thirty years, and at his death left it to be enjoyed by his son Aristobulus, who, soon after his accession to power, assumed the title of king. This dignity continued with the descendants of the Asmodean family till the year B.C. 34, when it ceased with the downfall of Antigonus, who, conquered by Herod and the Romans, was put to death by the common executioner.

ROMAN STANDARD.

To the foregoing histories is appended a brief notice of the events which almost immediately preceded the advent upon earth of the Messiah.

Herod, surnamed the Great, who overthrew the constitution established by Esdras, and who brought the Jews finally under the dominion of the Romans, by being made "king"* of Judea by a decree of the senate (B.C. 40), was born (B.C. 72) of a noble family in Idumea. The family name was Antipas, which his father changed to Antipator, to give it a Greek form. His father rose to political importance as a partisan of Hyrcanus, and was thus able to introduce his son to political life at an early age. Herod had the discernment to see that the Roman interest was the only way to power, and he therefore paid court most assiduously to each Roman general, as they succeeded each other in command of the army of Asia. To gain a party, also, with the Jews, he allied himself in marriage with Mariamne, a grand-daughter of Hyrcanus. Thus proceeding, step by step, in his ambitious designs, he became extremely hateful to the doctors of the Sanhedrim and the principal Jews, who perceived clearly what his designs were. Those who preserved their national pride saw in him a foreign adventurer of the hated race of the Idumenians (Edomites); and those who were still really zealous for the law of Moses saw in him a man of no sort of principle,

* Herod the Great was a titular king only, being in reality but a Roman official.

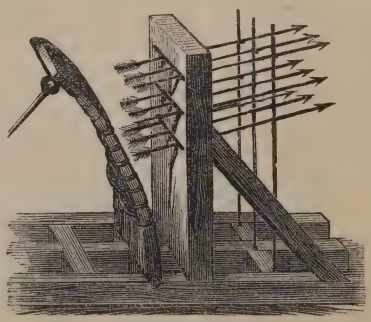
Roman subjugation of Judea.

who was ready to profess a zeal for that law whenever there was any end to be gained by it for himself, but who would just as readily offer sacrifice to Hercules, or any other Gentile idol, to ingratiate himself with his Roman supporters. This led to the formation of a party in the Sanhedrim against Herod; and in order to oppose him with the better appearance, this party placed Antigonus, the oldest of the surviving sons of Aristobulus, at their head. Herod, however, defeated the party of Aristobulus in a pitched battle, and in the year 40 B.C. went to Rome, where, through the influence of Marc Antony, he was declared king of Judea by the senate, and did homage to the Romans for his crown.

ROMAN GENERAL.

Thus gradually the sceptre passed away from Judah, and the faithless people for their sins became a tributary kingdom of the Roman empire under a foreigner. This, however, was not to be without a struggle; but the struggle did not, as heretofore under the Maccabees, end in the recovery of their kingdom, for God was no longer on their side. The party of the Sanhedrim, with Antigonus at their head, resisted Herod for two years after his return; but at length, with the help of the Romans, they were defeated, and Antigonus, the tool of the sacerdotal party, was put to death.

Herod's first use of his victory was to rid himself of his enemies in the Sanhedrim, whom he put to death. Having obtained the throne through bloodshed, he continued to the end of his life to secure himself upon it, by putting to death all whom he suspected as likely to interfere with him. In this way he murdered his own sons, his wife Mariamne, and, as we shall see later, the holy innocents of Bethlehem.



ROMAN CATAPULT,
for discharging javelins, and sometimes trunks of trees, against an enemy.

Roman subjugation of Judea.

As he knew quite well that the Jews, who retained a zeal for the law of Moses, could never be reconciled to him for their king, he made it the policy of his reign to undermine the faith of the people in the protection of God, as a defender distinct from the power of the Roman empire; and, as far as he could, he tried to overthrow and root out the spiritual work of Ezra. He placed a gilt eagle, the Roman ensign, at the entrance to the Temple; and the Jews, irritated at this affront, rose in tumult and tore it down. This act of resistance cost three thousand of the people their lives. Thus the fulness of time began to draw near for the birth of the Messiah, the prince, the expectation of all nations. The sceptre was departing from Judah.

ROMAN STANDARD.

The Roman Power.

CHAPTER VIII.

INTRODUCTORY TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

550. *What was the great ruling power at the birth of our Saviour?*

The Roman Empire, which had conquered and superseded the Greek and other preceding empires, and which held sway over every portion of the then known world.

551. *Why is it of the greatest importance to the reader of the New Testament to consider what was the origin of that empire, as well as its condition at that particular period?*

Because it had arisen through the providence of God with a special view to the dissemination of his Gospel.

552. This powerful and polished nation, to whom the whole human race now submitted, afforded, through its perfect centralization and the almost universal diffusion of its language, a vehicle for the spread of Divine truth. The mission of the family of Shem had been completed. The vocation of the Gentiles had commenced. The hitherto favoured regions of Asia were to yield to the superior claims of the Gentile west. Jerusalem had been, and was for a short time longer, destined to be the scene of many great—even of the greatest events—in the order of providence; but it would at last go into a final captivity with its children, and the sons of Japhet should claim the inheritance.

The Roman Power.

553. *What was the origin of the Roman power?*

Rome is supposed to have been founded about the year of the world 3256, 748 years B.C., by some Greek immigrants.

554. The foundations of the renowned city of Rome were laid by Romulus and Remus. This event was contemporaneous with the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. Its first inhabitants were chiefly of three tribes—the Ramnenses, or Romanenses, hence the word Rome, the Titienses, and the Luceres. In order to increase his population, Romulus opened an asylum or sanctuary, inviting thereto those who, from whatever cause, fled from the neighbouring cities. Rome was accordingly soon filled by the discontented, the guilty, or the aspiring, who sought a wider field for their exploits than their own country afforded. From a small beginning, and by slow degrees, the city gradually rose to eminence, until it became the seat of the fourth great empire predicted by Daniel (Dan. ii. 40), and obtained the name of the lord of the whole earth, the head and queen of it.

555. *What is the estimated number of the subjects of the Roman Emperor at the date of our Saviour's birth?*

The total amount is thought to have reached about one hundred and twenty million souls.

556. This vast census, greater than that of the whole of Europe at the present time, formed the most numerous society that has ever been united under the same system of government.

557. *What was the nature of the Roman government?*

It was at first monarchical. After two hundred and forty years it took a republican or consular form; finally, under Octavius Cæsar, B.C. 29, Rome became an empire.

558. When the Christian era commences—year of Rome (or from the date of the building of the city) 754—the empire had for its eastern limit the river Euphrates—the cataracts of the Nile, the African deserts, and Mount Atlas for ts southern—the Atlantic Ocean for its western—and the Danube and Rhine for its northern boundaries. The subjugated countries that lay beyond the limits of Italy were designated by the general name of provinces.

559. *What was the religion of the Roman empire at the birth of our Lord?*

It was an unmixed paganism, or a deeply-rooted idolatry of the grossest kind.

As the "fourth" great empire spoken of by Daniel, it is important to reconsider the words of prophecy as recorded in the celebrated passage, Dan. ii. 31—45; they form part of Nebuchadnezzar's remarkable dream as follows:—

The Roman Power.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible.

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms were of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass.

"His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like chaff of the summer thrashing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee *a kingdom*,* power, and strength, and glory.

"And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

"And after thee shall arise *another kingdom*† inferior to thee, and another *third kingdom* of brass,‡ which shall bear rule over the whole earth.

"And the *fourth kingdom*‖ shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided;§ but there shall be in it of the strength of iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

"And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay; so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

"And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a *kingdom which shall never be destroyed:*¶ and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

"Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands,** and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

560. *At what period did Judea become a Roman province?* In the year B.C. 63, under the rival priesthood of Hyrcanus and Aristobulus.

* The empire of Babylon. † Of the Persians. ‡ Of the Greeks.
‖ Of the Romans. § Into the Eastern and the Western empires.
¶ The Christian Kingdom, or Church.
** Referring to the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ.

The Roman Power.

561. The circumstances under which this event fell out, have been mentioned under the head of "Maccabees." They are here briefly repeated. The Romans and Jews first came into political contact when Judas Maccabæus, with a view to his defence against the "Greeks," represented by Demetrius, king of Syria, and in contravention, as pious Jews consider, of the fundamental relations which a true Hebrew ruler should have held with God, made a treaty offensive and defensive with the consular power, B.C. 161. The immediate successors of Judas Maccabæus renewed this treaty, and Judea was admitted by Rome into the rank of friends (*socii*) of the Roman people. John Hyrcanus, the successor of Simon Maccabæus, enjoyed his dignity as an independent Jewish prince. But Hyrcanus II., quarrelling with Aristobulus II., they appealed to Rome. Pompey, who then ruled the republic seems to have deemed this a favourable moment for annexing the kingdom of Judea to the dominions of Rome. He at first temporized, siding alternately with both the rivals. But in the year 63, he came to Damascus and marched over Cœlo-Syria, where he was met by ambassadors from Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. But besides these there awaited the victorious general a deputation from the Jewish nation, opposed to both the claimants, who were alleged by it to be subverters of the regular government, and anxious only to aggrandize themselves. He accordingly at once marched to Jerusalem, captured the city, made Hyrcanus high priest and prince of the Jews, restricting his territory and imposing tribute. This is the event from which the termination of the liberty of Judea, as a nation, is to be reckoned. Henceforth the Jews formed a portion of the subjects of the empire. Their kingdom was a part of the "province" of Syria.*

562. *In what way did the Roman conquest of Judea affect the Jewish worship and ceremonial?*

Except that the high priest became the nominee of the chief consul or emperor, or of his favourite, the Jews were left very much to themselves, and enjoyed their usual freedom of worship.

563. Acting on the principle that all unnecessary evil was gratuitous folly, the Roman conqueror generally availed himself of the aid afforded by existing institutions, and only ventured to give displeasure by establishing new ones in cases where the laws and customs of a country were insufficient for his purposes.

564. *Why was it now true that the sceptre had departed from Judah?*

Because, although left with some freedom of action as related to religion and its observances, the government and

* It is worthy of remark, that this conquest of Jerusalem, and with it of all Judea, by Pompey, B.C. 63, took place upon the very day when the Jews were observing a solemn fast and lamentation in commemoration of its capture by Nebuchadnezzar. Twelve thousand Jews were massacred in the temple courts, including many priests, who died at the very altar rather than suspend the sacred rites.

rule in every respect merged in that of the Roman senate, and this so thoroughly and effectually that they were never recovered.

565. *Why is Palestine so called?*

Because it is the country of Philistia, or of the Philistines.

566. The name occurs in many ancient writers, among whom is Josephus, and is by them applied to the whole region possessed by the Israelites.

567. *Why was it called Canaan?*

From Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, who first possessed and planted it. (Gen. xi. 31.)

568. This denomination was anciently confined to the country between the Mediterranean and the Jordan; but, subsequently, the land of Gilead beyond the Jordan, Phœnicia, and Philistia came to be included under the common name of Canaan.

569. *Why was the term "Holy Land" first applied?*

Because of the passage in Zechariah ii. 12, "The Lord shall inherit Judah, his portion in the Holy Land."

570. The land is here called "Holy" as being the Lord's property, and sanctified by his temple and worship; but Christians in applying the term regard it more as the scene of the life, travels, and sufferings of Christ. Jerusalem was situated on the southern boundary of the tribe of Benjamin, in latitude 31° 50′. It is thirty-seven miles distant from the Mediterranean Sea, and twenty-three from the Jordan.

The "Holy City" was built upon three hills, and was bounded on three sides by valleys, viz., on the east, west, and south; but on the north there was merely a steep declivity. The most lofty of these hills was Zion, otherwise called "the city of David." The hill of Moriah was situated to the east of Zion, and was separated from it by a deep valley intervening. Upon this hill the temple was built. There was a third hill of less elevation than either of those which have been mentioned, situated to the north, and separated from Moriah and Zion by a valley. It has been named in modern times Acra.

At the bottom of mount Moriah, to the south-east, flowed the fountain Siloam, or Siloe, the only fountain whose waters gladdened the city.

Both the valley which separates the city on the east from the much more lofty mount of Olives, and the winter torrent which flows through it, were called by the common name of Kedron. To the south of the city is "the valley of the son of Hinnom," in which was the place called "Tophet," rendered famous on account of the immolation of children, which, in the idolatrous times, was witnessed there. To the west is the valley of Gihon. The approach of an army to the city, from either of these three valleys, was difficult; it was, therefore, commonly attacked on the north. Many of the gates of the city are mentioned in various parts of the sacred writings, but the exact situation of them it is now difficult to ascertain.

New Testament Appellations.

571. *Why is the Gospel so called?*

Because it was a dispensation of good news to man, the Greek word "*evangelion*," translated Gospel, signifying glad tidings.

572. The English word, literally rendered, is "good news," or "tidings." The term "good tidings" is found in St. Luke ii. 10: "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

This, however, and the titles to the books generally, it is scarcely necessary to remark, were not affixed by the authors themselves, but are the work of compilers or editors. Like the prefaces and "head-lines," they are simply for utility, and are not supposed to be included in the inspired portion of the sacred writings.

573. *Why is the prefix "saint" used in connection with the names of the New Testament writers, the apostles, and evangelists?*

Because, being the authors of holy books, the mouthpieces of the Holy Ghost, and in most instances the workers of miracles, it is only reasonable to conclude that they were themselves holy, the word saint meaning a holy or sanctified person.

574. St. Paul speaks in his epistles of the first Christians as saints, "the elect of God," "called to be saints." He solicits alms for the poor saints at Jerusalem. In one place he says, "The saints that are in thy house." The faithful are exhorted continually to be holy, that is, saints. Hence the title as applied by a vast majority of the Christian world to the Apostles and Evangelists.

ST. MATTHEW.

575. *Who was St. Matthew?*

He was a native of Galilee, the son of Alpheus, a Jew and a tax-gatherer, and was also known by the name of Levi. He was called to follow Christ in the second year of our Lord's public ministry.

New Testament Authors.

576. St. Matthew was what is called a *portitor* or sub-collector of customs at Capernaum, on the lake of Tiberias (the sea of Galilee); he was not a *publicanus*, or farmer-general of customs. Thus it is evident that he belonged to what is termed the lower classes, a class which seems to have had our Saviour's special preference. He preached and ministered with the other apostles, at first in Judea, and afterwards in India, where he at length suffered martyrdom. His gospel comes first in order, as being the first written. Unlike the other gospels, this was written in Hebrew.

577. *Why does this gospel commence with the genealogy of Christ?*

Because, according to St. Irenæus, it was written to the Jews, who greatly desired to learn how Christ could be of the family of David. Matthew, having the power to show them this, undertook that special work; and hence the genealogy.

ST. MARK.

578. *Who was St. Mark?*

He was a native of Judea, the companion and secretary of St. Peter, with whom he travelled and preached.

579. *Why did he write his gospel?*

Because, as we learn from Eusebius, in his "Ecclesiastical History," he had been requested to do so by the converts at Rome.

580. That celebrated historian says that, following upon the wonderful success which St. Peter's preaching had in the imperial city, the converts were very desirous of possessing a consecutive account of the gospel transactions. They naturally applied to St. Mark, his secretary or amanuensis, and prevailed upon him to put it down in writing; but St. Mark had not seen our Saviour, and hence his gospel had to be dictated by St. Peter.

The Gospel of St. Mark was written in Greek, according to St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and others, though from the style and frequent Hebraisms his native country is clearly evident. He was much better acquainted with the Hebrew than the Greek. He, for the most part, adheres to the account furnished

by St. Matthew, often uses the same words, and in many places does but abridge the history; he alters, indeed, the order of the narrative at times, and relates several entire facts of which St. Matthew makes no mention.

St. Mark wrote his gospel about the third year of Claudius, that is, about the forty-fifth year of our Lord. His diction is concise and expressive; his periods are concluded with pleasing and elegant simplicity. The characteristic peculiarity of this evangelist as an author have been thus pointed out:—1, he reports the acts rather than the words of our Saviour; 2, he gives details more minutely and graphically than Matthew and Luke; 3, he is more particular in stating definite numbers, and furnishes more exact dates and times.

581. *Why does St. Mark omit the commendatory expression of our Lord in favour of the Apostle Peter, which St. Matthew mentions, while he is very particular in the mention of St. Peter's fall and denial of his Master?*

Because the gospel of St. Mark was dictated chiefly by St. Peter, who, from his great humility, chose that the evangelist should so write.

582. This is the opinion of St. Chrysostom, who adds, that it was from a similar motive that only two out of the four evangelists were apostles. The latter were the chief actors in the gospel history; and where such miracles were wrought, and such extraordinary gifts bestowed, they shrank from being the narrators.

583. *Who was St. Luke?*

He was a native of Antioch, the capital city of Syria, the companion of St. Paul in his apostolical excursions, and styled by him "the beloved physician and his fellow-labourer."

ST. LUKE.

584. It is argued, from the form of his name, that St. Luke had been a slave, and had received the gift of freedom. Among the higher ranks of the Romans the profession of physician was considered derogatory, and was left to the inferior classes. History furnishes instances of slaves receiving their freedom from the fact of their skilful treatment of disease. When or how the evangelist became a proselyte to the Christian religion is uncertain. It would appear that he followed his profession jointly with that of an evangelist, and that this might easily be needs no argument. St. Jerome informs us that he was very eminent in his profession. A tradition attributes to St. Luke some skill in painting also. Upon

this supposition the artists have frequently adopted St. Luke as a kind of patron, and the great academy of Roman art is called after his name. This evangelist appears to have been more constant in his attendance upon the great apostle of the Gentiles. He was with him in Rome through his first long imprisonment and after his release. St. Paul, during his last imprisonment, writes that the rest had all left him, and that Luke alone was with him (2 Tim. iv. 11). After the martyrdom of his friend, St. Luke preached in Italy, Gaul, and Greece. By the term Gaul some understand Galatia, which was likely, from its proximity to Greece. Paulinus states that St. Luke suffered martyrdom at Elæa, in Peloponnessus, near Achaia, by being crucified, about the year 90.

585. *Why was St. Luke's gospel written?*

Because certain erroneous accounts of the gospel transactions had obtained circulation, which it was very desirable an authentic history should supersede.

586. To prevent the mischief that might arise from thence, he diligently informed himself of the real truth from those enlightened apostles who had been acquainted with our Saviour "from the beginning;" he collected a circumstantial account of the things which Jesus had said and done from those who, as he himself says, were "from the beginning eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word" (ch. i.), for he was not conversant with our Saviour as St. Matthew and St. John were.

By a special disposition of the divine wisdom, it was ordained, says St. Augustine, that the evangelical history should be written by two men who had not seen the deeds they relate, to the end we might learn to submit our understanding in obedience to divine faith, whether it be communicated to us by an apostle or only by a disciple of an apostle; for the certitude of truth which is contained in the gospel rests not upon the grounds of human evidence, which at most can afford us nothing more than a moral certainty; it rests upon the special assistance of the Holy Ghost, who could not inspire the sacred penmen to write any thing but what was true.

The language of St. Luke's gospel is very pure; the author was well versed in the Greek tongue, and wrote it both elegantly and perspicuously. He is thought to have written the gospel in the year 53.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

587. *Who was St. John the Evangelist?*

He was a native of the town of Bethsaida, the son of Zebedee, and brother to St. James the Great.

New Testament Authors.

588. It may be worth while to consider for a moment the worldly position of the evangelist's father. Zebedee was the owner of a fishing-boat on the lake of Gennesaret, and with his sons followed the business of a fisherman. He was present, mending the nets with them, when Jesus called James and John to follow him; and as he offered no obstacle to their obedience, but remained alone without murmuring in the vessel, it is to be presumed that he had been previously a disciple of the Baptist, and as such knew Jesus to be the Messiah. It is not necessary to suppose that, as a fisherman, Zebedee was abjectly poor; the possession of a boat or fishing-ship was one proof, at least, that he was comparatively independent.

St. John, from his pure and amiable manners, became the favourite of Jesus; he was with him at his transfiguration on mount Tabor, and in the garden of Gethsemane; he leaned upon his Master's bosom at the last supper, was near him during his trial, and stood with the mother of Jesus under the cross. After the descent of the Holy Ghost, he preached the faith in Asia Minor, where he founded different churches. St. John was Bishop of Ephesus. Being called to Rome, he was condemned by the Emperor Domitian to be cast alive into a cauldron of boiling oil; but being miraculously preserved, and coming out more fresh and vigorous than he entered in, says Tertullian, he was banished to the isle of Patmos. Here he was favoured with the visions which form the subjects of the book of Revelation. After Domitian's death, St. John returned to Ephesus, wrote his gospel about the year 98, and died A.D. 100.

589. *Why was St. John's Gospel written?*

In consequence of the heresies of Cerinthus and Ebion (A.D. 90—98), who impiously asserted doctrines which aimed at the very root of Christianity in denying the divine nature of Christ.

590. They asserted, to the great scandal of the infant churches, that Jesus Christ had no existence previous to his birth of the Virgin Mary—in other words, that He was a mere man. St. John, as the last survivor of the twelve, was therefore called upon by the unanimous voice of the Church to write his indignant refutation. Hence this Gospel according to St. John, is higher in aim and more dignified in style than the three preceding ones. "St. John," says St. Augustine, in his commentary, "was in an especial manner made choice of to unfold the divinity of Jesus Christ. The other three evangelists seem to walk with their Master upon the earth, and in their progress relate the actions of his mortal life; while St. John, like an eagle, soars aloft above the clouds of human understanding, and, penetrating into the bosom of the Father, fixes his eye upon the divine Word, the co-eternal Son of God, without being dazzled by the rays, or overpowered by the glory of infinite majesty."

The essential aim, then, of this gospel is the manifestation of the glory of Jesus Christ, as displayed in establishing a religion which, spiritual in its nature, universal in its spread, and everlasting in its operation and effects, should supersede Judaism and every form and relict of Judaical usages and notions. This aim is pursued in a regular and systematic arrangement.

591. *What is the meaning of the word Apostle?*

The term is generally employed in the New Testament as

The Twelve Apostles.

the descriptive appellation of a comparatively small class of men to whom Jesus Christ entrusted the organization of his Church, and the dissemination of his religion among mankind.

592. He ordained twelve of his disciples "that they should be with Him." These He named apostles. "He gave to them power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease," and "He sent them to preach the kingdom of God." To them He gave the keys of the kingdom of God, and constituted them princes over the spiritual Israel. Previously to his death He promised to them the Holy Spirit, to fit them to be the founders and governors of the Christian Church. After his resurrection He solemnly confirmed their call, saying, "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you;" and gave them a commission to preach the gospel to every creature. At the Feast of Pentecost they received the plenitude of these spiritual gifts through the infusion of the promised Comforter, or Holy Ghost. Then, for the first time, they had "the mind of Christ"—"thenceforth they spoke not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." They authoritatively taught the doctrine and the law of their Lord, and organized churches. Of the twelve originally ordained to the apostleship, one, Judas Iscariot, fell, and Matthias was, by lot, substituted for him. After the martyrdom of St. James, St. Paul, miraculously converted and called to the office, filled the vacancy in the apostolic college. The word apostle, signifying a messenger, is beautifully alluded to by the prophet Malachi (iii. 1).

ST. PETER.

593. *Why were twelve apostles chosen?*

Because that was the number of the tribes of Israel—the apostles being mystically constituted the heads of the tribes of the new Israel, or Church of the gospel dispensation.

594. The number twelve had a mystical signification, symbolizing just proportion, beauty, stability, and the like. Thus, Exod. xxiv. 4, twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes; 1 Kings xviii. 31, Elijah took twelve stones and built an altar; 1 Kings xix. 19, Elisha ploughed with twelve yoke of oxen Job xxxviii. 32, "Canst thou bring forth the twelve signs?" Ezek. xliii. 16, "The altar shall be twelve

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cubits long and twelve broad;" Matthew xiv. 20, "They took up of the fragments twelve baskets." Here we see that the multiplication of the loaves being strictly miraculous, our Lord chose that the overplus should bear a symbolical proportion. Matt. xxvi. 53, "twelve legions of angels;" Luke ii. 42, "When Jesus was twelve years old." Bossuet says upon this point, "We are to observe in the numbers a certain figurative proportion which the Holy Ghost deigns to point out to observation. This number of twelve (Rev. vii. 4), multiplied by itself and then by a thousand makes 144,000. In the solid proportion of this square number, the unchangeable nature of God and his promises are indicated."

595. *Who was St. Peter?*

He was the son of Jonas, and, as well as his brother Andrew, a fisherman, who lived in the state of wedlock at Capernaum; having, however, been born at Bethsaida. Peter may be briefly described as one who, having been called by the Saviour of the world, earned, by the fine traits of his character, the honour of being regarded as their speaker and representative by his fellow-disciples, and the high esteem of his Master, who reposed great confidence in him, which, eventually at least, was proved to be deserved by the zeal and wisdom with which he preached the gospel, especially among his fellow-countrymen, the Jews. Tradition represents him as having visited Rome, and been the first bishop of that imperial city, where he was crucified about the same time that his fellow-labourer, the Apostle Paul, suffered.

ST. ANDREW.

596. *Who was St. Andrew?*

He was one of the first disciples of Christ, and brother of the Apostle Peter. His native place was Bethsaida, on the lake Genesareth, where he and his brother carried on the trade of fishing. Before he joined Jesus he had

been a disciple of John the Baptist. In the gospel narrative we find him in constant and intimate connection with our Saviour. The book of Acts mentions him only once, a fact which, with others of a similar nature, may serve to show that the accounts of the early Church, that have come down to us, by no means contain the entire history; probably, more has been lost than we actually possess. Tradition makes him travel as a missionary in various countries—Scythia, Asia Minor, Thrace, Macedonia, and Achaia; and, at the order of the Roman pro-consul, whose wife and brother he had converted, to suffer martyrdom at Patræ, in Achaia, on the gulf of Lepanto, on a kind of cross, something like a letter X, and named from him a "St. Andrew's cross."

ST. JAMES THE ELDER.

597. *Who was St. James the Elder?*

He was a son of the Galilean Zebedee and Salome, and brother of the Apostle John (the beloved disciple), in conjunction with whom he, while pursuing his occupation as a fisherman, was called to the high office of being an apostle of Jesus Christ. The two, with Peter, were admitted to the special confidence of the Lord, so that James was present at his transfiguration, and at his humiliation in the garden; a privilege which may have been the occasion why their mothers preferred a petition for their pre-eminence ("That they might sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left in his kingdom").

598. The activity which James displayed during the lifetime of our Lord, appears to have been resumed with correspondent power after his ascension and the establishment of the infant Church, for he was made an object of the wrath of Herod Agrippa, who, A.D. 43, caused him to be beheaded.

The Twelve Apostles.

599. *Who was St. John?**

He was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and younger brother of the Apostle James the Elder. Like the other members of Zebedee's family, he was a fisherman. As his father employed hired servants, it is understood that he was in good circumstances, having a house of his own, to which, at the direction of Jesus from the cross, he took our Lord's mother.

600. This apostle was related to the family of Jesus, and is numbered, on that account, with our "Lord's brethren." John at first attached himself to the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, being probably present when the former gave his testimony to Jesus and proclaimed Him to be the Lamb of God. Soon after this meeting, our Lord expressly called John and his brother, with Peter and Andrew, their companions, while engaged in their calling, to be his followers and apostles.

ST. PHILIP.

In illustration of his peculiarly amiable character in after life, tradition has preserved the following anecdotes:—On one occasion, being engaged in his apostolic duties, he saw a young man distinguished for bodily and mental endowments, whom, on leaving the place, he commended to the special care and oversight of the bishop. At first no pains were spared to inform the mind and enrich the soul of this pupil; but when he had undergone baptism, the bishop utterly neglected him. In consequence, the youth was by degrees estranged from the Christian life, fell a prey to temptation, and became chief of a band of robbers, all of whom he outdid in cruel and bloodthirsty deeds. After some time St. John returned, learned the sad fate of his pupil, and at once set out to seek and save him, regardless of his own age and feebleness, and the dangers of his errand. He found the object of his search, induced him to quit his evil companions, and, by the gentle persuasion of Christian love, brought him to sincere repentance.

Many years after the above occurrence, when, through the weight of years, he could appear in the temple of public worship only when carried thither by the pious hands of his disciples, and was no longer in a condition to give utterance to a continued discourse, he was wont to say on all occasions nothing but these words, "Little children, love one another." At last, some persons being dissatisfied

* St. John is here considered as an Apostle.

at always hearing the same thing, asked him, "Master, why sayest thou always this?" He answered, "Because it is the command of the Lord; and when this is done, it is enough."

601. *Who was St. Philip?*

He was one of the twelve apostles, born at Bethsaida of Galilee. It is probable that previously to his call to the apostleship he was personally known to Jesus. Very little is recorded of Philip in the gospels. We find him in connection with the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes (John vi. 5, 7), and his request to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," proves that, like the other apostles previous to their enlightenment through the descent of the Holy Ghost, he had but a very low view of the nature of the new dispensation.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

602. According to the ecclesiastical tradition, Philip preached the gospel in Phrygia, and suffered crucifixion under the Emperor Domitian.

603. *Who was St. Bartholomew?*

He was the same person, with Nathaniel, whom our Lord so highly praises in the words, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." Very little is known of this apostle's history—perhaps less than that of any other. He is said to have preached in India, and to have suffered death by flaying. For this reason St. Bartholomew is represented in ancient pictures and sculptures with a knife in his hand.

604. An eminent writer,* says, "There is a great disproportion between the amount of good which the Apostles wrought, and the space that their names

* "People's Dictionary of the Bible."

occupy on the page of history. A very few lines relate all that is known respecting Bartholomew. Even his name is a subject of doubt. At first view, it is impossible not to regret this want of full and detailed information. We soon, however, learn to see that in this, as in other cases, the actual ordinations of Providence are the best. Bartholomew and his associates had a great work to perform, and were so ardently and exclusively engaged in it, that they had neither time nor thought to write down their deeds. They were too busy, too disinterested, too unconscious, to become historians of their own doings. They were men of deeds, not of words; intent on saving the world, rather than in erecting a memorial to their own honour; and so, in active and ceaseless labours, their lives passed away till the time was gone when they themselves had strength, and others could not readily, in that age, find materials for biography. They died, and left to earth only the blessed deeds which they had wrought—their own holy example, and the good and happy lives of their numerous converts. They died, and found their reward on high."

ST. THOMAS.

605. *Who was St. Thomas?*

He was one of the twelve; according to some, a native of Galilee, and to others, of Antiocha. His name signifies a "twin;" in Greek *Didymus*. Tradition mentions his twin sister Lysia The transactions relative to this Apostle, narrated in the Gospels, show that he was of a very ardent temperament. "Let us go also," he said to the other disciples, when Jesus was about to visit the weeping sisters of the deceased Lazarus, "that we may die with Him."

If Thomas was incredulous of our Lord's resurrection, it was not from any but the best motives. "A resolute and lively faith is ever necessarily combined with a sense of the importance of *evidence*, and with a desire to keep its objects unalloyed and free from error and superstition. Christ himself did not blame Thomas for availing himself of all possible evidence, but openly pronounced them blessed who would be open to conviction, even if some external form of evidence should not be within their reach."*

* Dr. C. H. F. Bialloblotzky.

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In the distribution of their labours by the apostles, Parthia fell to the lot of Thomas, as we are informed by Origen. After preaching with success in this kingdom, he extended his mission over other parts of the East. Sophronius mentions that by his labours he established the faith among the Medes, Persians, Carmanians, and other nations of those parts. Modern Greek authors claim St. Thomas as the Apostle of both India and Ethiopia; but the last term is very vague, being given sometimes to Asia and sometimes to a portion of Africa. Most accounts agree that this Apostle suffered martyrdom in some part of the East Indies.

606. *Who was St. Matthew?*

He was both an apostle and an evangelist; a Hebrew, born in Galilee, and, previous to his conversion, *portitor*, or tax-gatherer. (See par. 575.)

ST. JAMES THE LESS.

607. *Who was St. James, called "the less"?*

He was an apostle, and the writer of an epistle called the General Epistle of James.

608. *Who was St. Jude?*

He was one of the apostles, the author of the Epistle of St. Jude, and a relative of our Lord. It would appear that St. Jude was cousin to Jesus, his mother being Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and the sister of the blessed Virgin.

609. *Who was Simon, surnamed Zelotes?*

He was one of the apostles, and was called Zelotes from his having belonged to a certain party among the Jews called Zealots. He is also called "the Canaanite," which does not mean a Gentile, but was an Aramaic name, bearing the same signification as Zelotes.

610. Simon is the least known of all the apostles, whether we confine our search for his annals to the pages of Scripture, or extend them to the traditions of the Fathers. From the former source, not a single fact beyond his appointment to

the apostleship is mentioned. The martyrologies of Jerome, Bede, Ado, and Usuord place the scene of his labours and suffering in Persia, at a city called Suanir. It is stated in the apocryphal acts of St. Andrew, that in the Cimmerian Bosphorus there was a tomb in a grotto, with an inscription importing that Simon the Zealot was interred there. His death is said to have been caused by the idolatrous priests. Those who mention his death say that he was crucified.

ST. JUDE.

611. *Why were St. John and his brother James called Boanerges, or sons of thunder?*

Because of the great zeal which induced them, before being enlightened by the inspirations of the Holy Ghost upon the day of Pentecost, to solicit permission from Christ to call down fire from heaven upon the heads of the Samaritans who rejected our Saviour.

612. That the zeal of St. John, although misdirected on this occasion, was grounded upon the most generous motives, is beyond all question. He was the youngest of the apostles called to that office. He was the only one of them that stood firmly at the side of Jesus when He was led to trial and suffering; to him was consigned, from the cross itself, the care of the virgin mother of our Lord; and as the author of the book of Revelation, he was the last of the New Testament writers to whom the Word of God was directly communicated.

613. *Who was Judas Iscariot?*

He was a Hebrew, and native of Kerioth, a town of Judah. The appellation Iscariot (from Kerioth) was to distinguish him from the Apostle Jude (Judas in Syriac-Greek).

614. He commonly accompanied Jesus and the eleven other apostles, whose travelling purse he bore. In this office of treasurer he displayed a greedy and dishonest spirit. This is insinuated in John, chapter xii., verse 6, where it is said, "Not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief and had the bag, and bare what was therein." Commentators agree that the word "bare" here signifies "to convey away," "to embezzle." This spirit urged him to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver (shekels), a sum equal to about four pounds ten shillings of our money. In the garden of Gethsemane he accomplished his wickedness, betraying

his Master with a kiss, which served to make His person known to His foes. The perpetration of this wickedness, as is not unusual, brought remorse, and remorse rose to intolerable anguish, which drove Judas to an effort to rescue his Master; and this failing, to self-destruction. The extreme turpitude of Judas has led some persons to endeavour, by any means, to find some mitigating circumstances in his guilty act; but there can be little use in such a course. He appears to have been the slave of his avarice, which alone urged him to the commission of the crime with which he stands charged in the gospels. "His last crime," that of despair, says an ancient father, "was his worst. If Judas had had recourse to sincere repentance and not to the halter, there was mercy in store even for the traitor."

ST. SIMON ZELOTES.

615. *Why were no commands given by Christ for writing the New Testament?*

Because the truths of the New Covenant were to be impressed by the Holy Spirit, following upon the preaching and miracles of Jesus and his apostles.

616. The independence of Christianity on dead letters necessarily postponed the time when its doctrines and facts were committed to writing, at least in so express and formal a manner as is implied in the composition of histories; but the very epistles (of St. Paul) which conveyed those indirect reproaches against a religion in letters became the germ of a religious literature by far the richest as well most precious of all others, whose only great defect now is found to be a want o immediate connection with the first days of the planting of the gospel. That literature, under the guidance of Providence, came into existence *at the bidding of circumstances.** St. Paul's churches required instruction and correction; *therefore he wrote epistles.* For the conversion of large masses of the world, arguments in proof of the Messiahship of Jesus were needed different in character, like those for whom they were intended; *hence the gospels.*

* The words here italicized are used in a limited sense. The present work engages to give the best reason why of the subject under consideration; but there is no such thing, strictly speaking, as "the bidding of circumstances." Every thing is either ordered or permitted to be done by God, to whom every thing is known, whether as regards the past, the present, or the future; for, in the words of the Apostle St. Paul (to the Athenians), "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts xvii. 28.)

"Gospel" and "Epistle."

617. *How have the New Testament writings generally been handed down to us?*

The compositions forming the New Testament were primarily hand-writings, or, to use the more common term, manuscripts.

618. Such manuscripts, as proceeding from their authors, may be called autographs, from *autos*, "self," and *graphein*, to "grave," "to write;" as transcribed by others from the originals, apographs or copies. A manuscript is an autograph, whether written by the author or an amanuensis. The ancients seldom wrote their treatises with their own hands, but dictated them to others, called "swift writers," "fair writers," or simply "book writers." In this way, probably, a great part of the books of the New Testament were written. With the progress of the gospel, apographs were multiplied till they became very numerouus, inasmuch as the demand for copies increased and spread on every side. Manuscripts, whether original or copies, comprised either portions or the whole of the New Testament. Such as comprised portions came first into existence; they consisted of one epistle or one gospel, or in each case of more than one.

619. *What was the origin of the present division into gospels and epistles?*

At an early period the Christian writings were read in the church assemblies, for which purpose they were divided into portions, containing either select passages which, when put together, received the common name of *lectionarium*, or "reader;" and if it contained the gospels, *evangeliarium*, "book of the gospels;" if the acts and epistles, *epistolare*.

MEDIÆVAL TRANSCRIBER.

620. The manuscripts were transcribed with great care and diligence, and transmitted from hand to hand, from church to church, and from age to age. At first transcription was the work of pious individuals; afterwards it became the duty of the inhabitants of religious houses,* in most of which was set apart a

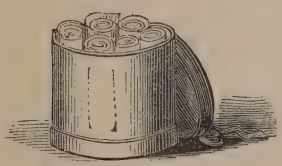
* Monasteries.

scriptorium, or writing-room, in which the transcription of manuscripts was systematically carried on. The conscientious care bestowed upon this important task secured the copies from depravation. The terrible words of St. John's last chapter, "He who adds to the words," etc., doubtless had its effect in maintaining their scrupulous fidelity; and we have reason to believe that, with some very trifling exceptions, the MSS. have not suffered from falsification. These precious documents were thus preserved in and by writing till the revival of letters, when they were brought forth out of the dusty repositories in which they had long and quietly lain, and shortly after the invention of printing were happily put beyond the reach of danger by being consigned to the custody of the press. In order to appreciate the loving care and untiring patience of the old transcribers, the reader is advised to pay a visit to the manuscript department of the British Museum, where will be found a great many examples of the ancient mode of copying.

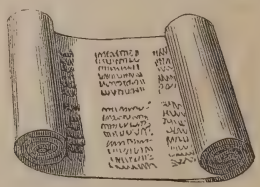
621. *What was the material chiefly used for their manuscripts by the writers of the New Testament books?*

Manuscripts at that time were for the most part written upon paper made from the *papyrus* plant (par. 13), but parchment made from skins of animals was also used.

622. With regard to the manufacture of paper from *papyrus*, it should be observed that *papyrus* leaves, when they are dry, are apt to split in the direction of the fibres. It has commonly been found expedient, therefore, to glue others at the back in an opposite direction, and by thus crossing the fibres at right angles the texture is strengthened; and when it has been pressed and polished, the page is less unseemly and inconvenient than might have been supposed. The inner bark of the *papyrus* was divided with a needle into very thin coats. These were placed side by side longitudinally, and the edges were glued together. Similar layers were glued across these behind at right angles to give the page the requisite strength. The sheets were then pressed, dried, polished, and otherwise prepared for use. Pliny enumerates the various kinds of paper, from the coarsest, which



CAPSA OR SCRINIUM FOR THE RECEPTION OF MSS.



VOLUMEN OR MS. ROLL.

was used, like our brown paper, for packing, to the most expensive and finest. At the zenith of the Roman power Alexandria was the chief seat of this valuable manufacture.

The exportation of paper being prohibited by one of the Ptolemies out of envy against Eumenes, king of Pergamus, who endeavoured to rival him in the magnifi-

cence of his library, the use of parchment, or the art of preparing skins for writing was discovered at Pergamus; hence called *Pergamena scripta*, or *membrana*, *i.e.*, parchment.

The Romans commonly wrote only on one side of the paper or parchment; and if the sheets had not been previously formed into a quire by the binders, they joined them together when they had finished what they had to write. They were then rolled upon a cylinder or staff; hence *volumen*, a volume or scroll.

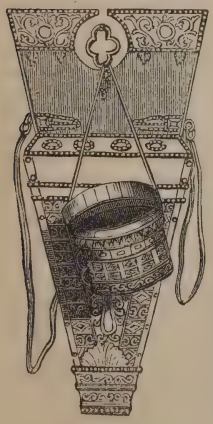
623. *What is the origin and meaning of the word Codex; as the "Codex Justinianus," "Codex Theodosianus," etc.?*

The codex consisted of single sheets of parchment or papyrus, fastened together behind with a slip or thong of leather.

624. These differed from the volumen or scroll by being generally preserved flat, and formed the original of our present book. The title of a volume or code along with the name of the author was sometimes written in red colours on the back of the first sheet, which remained visible after the sheets had been rolled on the cylinder, and sometimes upon a slip of paper attached to the volume.

625. *What is the origin of the word Rubric?*

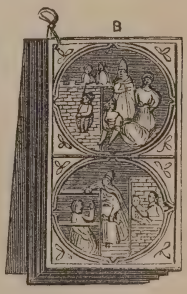
It dates its origin from the above-mentioned *red titles* affixed to the first pages or to the exteriors of volumes and codices. Indices and marginal notes came at length to be thus distinguished; hence the present rubric.



INKSTAND.

626. *What was the nature of the ink used?*

It appears to have been what is termed in art a "body-colour," or a more solid medium than is at present in use, and similar to what is used by the modern Chinese.



PUGILLANES.

627. The reason for this opinion is to be found in the elevation of the letters upon the Herculaneum MSS. The inkhorns were sometimes made of lead, sometimes of silver, and were generally polygonal in their form. (Fig. A.) In writing it was customary to make use of the Egyptian reed, *Calamus arundo*, though the

reed from the island of Cnidos was frequently preferred. (Quills were not used for writing until the seventeenth century.) These reeds were provided with slits like our modern pens.

The instrument used for writing on waxen tables was an iron pencil with a sharp point, called *stylus* or *graphium*. The stylus was broad at one end, so that when they wished to correct anything they turned the stylus and smoothed the wax with the broad end that they might write it anew. For the sake of this convenience, as well as for expedition, an author usually wrote on these tables previous to transcribing what he had written on paper or parchment. The Romans usually carried with them wherever they went small writing-tables called *pugillanes* (Fig. B, p. 143), made of citron, box-wood, etc., and containing three, four, five, or more leaves.*

628. *Why have so many commentaries upon the sacred Scriptures been considered necessary by theologians and by Christians generally?*

Because of the necessity for transcription incidental to manuscript documents—and especially previous to the invention of the art of printing—and the consequent liability to an imperfect and even a corrupt rendering.

629. In the earliest period it was customary to write in initial, or capital letters, without making any distinction between single words by leaving a space, or between the different members of a sentence by punctuation. Hence errors might be easily committed by transcribers which it would be difficult afterwards to rectify. The lines were uniformly continuous in prose writers as well as in poets. After a time, smaller letters were introduced. But the most important fact is the habit of abbreviating. Abbreviations occur not only in inscriptions upon monuments and coins, but also in MSS., and which appear to have been in use so long as the initial letters, and letters approximating in size to the initial, were adhered to. When the smaller letters came into use, and the abbreviations were gradually resolved, their meaning was but imperfectly understood, and thus errors were occasioned in the transcription of more ancient MSS. These abbreviations consist either in single letters for whole words, or in the first syllables of words, or also in particular signs, as in rhetorical, chemical, or musical works to denote different figures of speech, weights, and measures. The invention of these belongs, without doubt, to the Greeks. But they were used equally by Greek and Roman writers. They were particularly made use of by transcribers in the multiplication of copies. Another reason why commentaries are required is to be found in the various signification of the most common expressions scattered through the sacred text. These are—

I. The literal signification, or sense, which is divided into the literal properly so called, or the plain acceptation of the words; and figurative-literal, when it would be obviously wrong to use the proper literal, as when our Saviour is called "a lion," etc.

* The Romans never wore a sword or dagger in the city. They often, upon a sudden provocation, used the graphium or style as a weapon; hence probably the stiletto of the modern Italians.

Difficulties of Interpretation.

II. The mystical, or hidden sense, which is again divided:—1. Into the allegorical, which refers to faith. 2. The tropological, or moral, relating to charity. And 3. The anagogical, or relating to hope.

These different senses are exemplified in the word "Jerusalem":—

1. Jerusalem is taken in the literal sense when it means the capital of Judea,

2. In a mystical-tropological sense when applied to the soul of man.

3. In a mystical-allegorical, when applied to Christ's Church on earth; and

4. In a mystical-anagogical sense when applied to the Church triumphant in heaven, or the state of the blessed.

It has been stated (par. 16) that the first printed book was the Vulgate, or Latin translation of the Bible. The first printed commentary was that by Nicholas de Lyra, issued about 1476. De Lyra, or Lyranus, was a native of Lyre in Normandy, from which place is name is derived. He was a converted Jew, and a man of great and comprehensive mind. He was among the earliest who brought Rabbinical learning to bear upon Christian archæology and Biblical criticism in general.

630. *Why do most of the New Testament Epistles commence with the name of the writer?*

Because such was the custom among all the best writers of that age; indeed, it had become, by prescription, a kind of rule.

631. In writing letters the Romans always put their own name first, then that of the person or persons to whom they wrote, sometimes with the addition of *suo** as a mark of familiarity or fondness. They always annexed the letter S. for *salutem, sc. dicit* ("wishes health"). As their names were prefixed to the letters, consequently there was no necessity to subscribe them. A wish was sometimes added for the prosperity of the person to whom they wrote, and this was termed *subscriptio*. As the Romans had no posts, letters were commonly despatched by messengers, and in these the name of this messenger was sometimes mentioned.

632. *Why did the Jews, as a people, reject Jesus Christ, failing to recognize in Him the promised Messiah?*

In order to answer this question fully, it is necessary to consider that, although in possession of the books of Moses, of the Psalms, and the prophecies, which abounded in allusions to His advent, and pointed out the time and manner of His appearance, the Jews had become so grossly blinded to all spiritual things, that the very law and worship which they followed was a mere lip service, in which the heart had no place.

633. They had come to expect in the Messiah an earthly prince—a kind of transcendant Solomon, who should conquer and subdue the earth for them, and lay

* *His*—*e. g.*, Paul to *his* beloved Timothy.

its spoils at their feet. The annexed extract, which applies to the present time, is equally pertinent with regard to the period of our Lord's life on earth:—

"The greatest discordance prevails among the Jewish doctors respecting the time of the Messiah's anticipated coming. They pretend that his appearance is delayed by the iniquities of Israel, and denounce all who attempt to calculate the exact time. 'May their bones swell and burst,' exclaims the Talmud; notwithstanding several calculations have been made, from time to time, and falsified. The advantages expected from the Messiah are entirely of a temporary, sensual, and earthly kind, but, of course, nothing is to be hoped for by the Gentiles. Rabbi Machir, who lived at the end of the 14th century, in a work entitled 'Avchath Rochel,' describes numerous commotions and prodigies which are to precede the coming of the Messiah. This account, in an abridged from, is as follows:—'When Israel shall be gathered from all nations, and brought into the land of their forefathers, and Messiah shall have rebuilt the city, and restored the temple with its services, He will celebrate, as the rabbis assure us, a royal festival, to which all Israelites will be invited, where they will have a gracious reception, and every one be seated at a golden table. At this feast He will entertain Himself and the company with a battle between Behemoth and Leviathan. The feats of Behemoth will be highly gratifying, and Leviathan will come armed with his scales as a breastplate and coat of mail. The battle will be fierce, but neither party will be victorious. Both will fall exhausted, when Messiah, with a great and strong sword, will slay them. These tremendous animals, together with the enormous bird Bar Jachne, are then to be spitted and laid to the fire, and all needful preparations made for the splendid banquet. Bread is to be obtained from wheat which will greatly surpass the growth of our days, as much as Bar Jachne exceeds a common bird. Sauce is to be yielded in perfection in the salted Leviathan; and the dessert to consist of all the delicious productions of the garden of Eden, including even some of the fruit of the tree of life. The guests are to be treated with the most exquisite wine, which had been produced in Paradise immediately after the creation, and preserved in Adam's wine cellar for this great occasion. Toward the end of the feast, the Messiah will fill a cup for the guests, over which they are to say grace; and the Messiah will be requested to perform this office, but God will offer it to Michael, Michael to Gabriel, Gabriel to Abraham, Abraham to Isaac, Isaac to Moses, Moses to Joshua; but each declining in succession, God will assign it to David. The cup will contain about 214 gallons. What remains of the provisions will be divided among the guests, who will sell them in the market at Jerusalem. Of part of the skin of Leviathan will be made tabernacles, pavilions, or awnings for the just, and the rest will be spread upon the walls of Jerusalem, diffusing a light to the extremities of the world. The banquet is to be followed, and the festival concluded, by music and dancing. The Messiah is afterwards to marry, having the daughters of kings for wives, but one of the most beautiful virgins of Israel as the principal wife or queen. Different periods of time are allotted for the duration of his reign, but all agree that He will die like other men, his son reigning in his stead, and his posterity in succession.'"—*Encyclop. Metropolitana:* Article, "Cox's Biblical Antiquities."

634. *Whence has the practice originated of dating historical events from "the year of our Lord?"*

It is to Dionysius the Little that we owe the custom of

The Christian Era or "Anno Domini."

counting the years by the birth of our Saviour. Till then the Christians had followed in this respect the custom established in their several countries. The most part, however, reckoned from the foundation of Rome, or the succession of consuls or that of emperors.

635. But in the sixth century the Christian era of Dionysius was generally adopted. It begins the 25th of March, the day of our Saviour's incarnation, and this is the epoch whence all the dates of briefs issued from the court of Rome are supposed to derive. The ordinary custom, however, is to date the beginning of the year from the 1st of January. Thus the era of Dionysius begins nine months before the era ordinary among Christians.

636. *Why is this era called the "Dionysian?"*

Because introduced by Dionysius in the 6th century, in order to determine the date of Easter.

637. The commencement of this computation is called the Dionysian period, and also the Victorian period, from Victor of Aquitain, who revised it. The opinion most generally followed places the birth of our Saviour under the year 4000 from the creation of the world. But there are good reasons for supposing it to have occurred somewhat earlier. According to the common system, the beginning of our era answers to the seven hundred and seventy-sixth year of the Olympiads, the seven hundred and fifty-second from the foundation of Rome, and to the seven hundred and forty-seventh of the era of Nabonassar, King of Babylon; this last is famous among the astronomers, on account of the great use which Ptolemy, among others, made of it. It commenced the 26th of February. But if we would compare it with the Christian era, we must remember that its years consisted only of three hundred and sixty-five days.

638. *Why is the head of our Saviour, when exhibited in paintings and sculptures, with a "glory" or circle of rays?*

Because thus the universal mind of Christianity endeavours to express its conviction that He is the light of the spiritual world, in the same way that the sun is the central light of the lower creation.

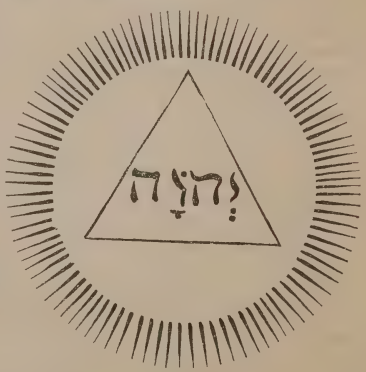
Emblematical Representations.

639. Jesus Christ has been frequently represented under the form of a lamb :* but He is besides frequently drawn under that of the Good Shepherd, who guards the lambs. Jesus, as a lamb, yielded up His life without a murmur, and He also, like a shepherd, filled with solicitude for His flock, came to seek lost man, and to lead him back to the bosom of his God. Jesus, as He has Himself said, is the Good Shepherd, who seeks and bears upon his shoulders the wandering sheep, the unfaithful soul, and brings it back to the fold. The painted monuments in the Roman catacombs (from one of which the annexed cut is taken) constantly present the figure of a shepherd, sometimes youthful and beardless, clad in a short tunic, striped with two longitudinal bands; he is standing, and bears upon his shoulders the sheep that had been lost, and that he had loved. In the design it will be seen that the shepherd has in his right hand a pan-pipe, whilst, with the left, he holds the sheep securely on his shoulders. Any illustrations taken from the catacombs should have for Christians a most intense interest, seeing that it was here, in the holes and caves of the earth, that the followers of their crucified Lord, during the most frightful persecutions under the Roman Emperors, were alone enabled to hold their religious meetings.

JESUS CHRIST, THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

640. *Why is the Triangle surrounded with glory used as an emblem of the Holy Trinity?*

Because that figure being one, yet three-fold — each side or face equal to the other—is an apt representation, as far as any created thing can be, of the triune nature of God, as expressed in the sacred Scriptures, and defined in the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds.



* See the heading to Chapter VIII.

641. "The triangle is the linear emblem of God and the Holy Trinity. The name of God, or Jehovah, is inscribed in Hebrew letters within the triangle, and both the name and the figure are placed in the centre of a radiating circle, symbolic of eternity. God the Father, or Jehovah, here occupies the field of the triangle, or the Trinity, which is itself contained within the circle of eternity."—Didron's *Christian Iconography*.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

642. *Why was Zacharias the priest and the father of John the Baptist struck dumb?* (Luke i.)

Because of his incredulity when it was announced to him by an angel that he should have a son by his wife Elizabeth, who should be the precursor of the Messiah.

643. Zacharias, while engaged in burning incense, was visited by the ange Gabriel, who informed him that, in compliance with his prayers, his wife should bear a son, whose name he should call John. Although he had prayed for this blessing, he seems to have been doubtful of its fulfilment, even after the appearance and assurance of the angel. Accordingly, he asks for some sign or token that this shall surely come to pass. A token is given him. He shall be dumb—his tongue shall be sealed till the prediction is fulfilled by the event.

It was customary with the Jews, when they heard that any wonderful event was to take place, to inquire whether the Almighty had manifested his will by any supernatural sign.

Zacharias appears to have been made both deaf and dumb, for when the child had to be named, and the wish of its father had to be ascertained, it was necessary to communicate with him by means of writing tablets.

644. *Why is it said of Zacharias that his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord?* (Luke i. 9.)

Because the priests drew lots for the different functions to be performed in the same week; and now it fell to the lot of Zacharias to burn or offer up incense, morning and evening, in that part of the temple called the *Holy*, where was the altar of incense.

B.C. 1.—Birth of St. John the Baptist.

645. *Why is it remarked that "the multitude were praying without" at the time of incense?*

In order to show that the angel who appeared to Zacharias was sent to him alone, and could not be seen by the people.

646. *Why was an angel sent to announce the birth of John the Baptist?*

Because of the high dignity to which, as the precursor of Jesus Christ, he had been called.

647. Angels had visited the patriarchs of the old covenant, and John, as the last of the prophets, was thus appropriately distinguished.

648. *Why was the son of Zacharias to be called John?*

No particular reason is stated in the Scriptures, but the meaning of the word being "grace," or "favour," we may infer that it was significant of the forerunner of Him who is the source of all grace and blessing to man.

649. As now in baptism, names were given in circumcision. Great importance was attached to the name of a child; it indicated at least the wish of the sponsors, and was often a form of dedication to some particular work. The prophetical character annexed to most of the patriarchs enabled them to foreshadow the future vocation and character of the child. Hence, "He shall be named Jesus"—*i.e.*, a Saviour, "for He shall save His people from their sins."

650. *Why was the mother of Jesus, who was to be born of a virgin, espoused to Joseph?*

Because, besides that an espousal did not necessitate their living together, it was desirable that Mary should be consigned to the care of a lawful protector.

651. Espousing or betrothing was a solemn promise of marriage made by two persons each to the other at such a distance of time as they agreed upon. After such espousal was made (which was generally when the parties were young) the woman continued with her parents several months—sometimes years—before she was brought home to the house of her husband.

652. *Why was the blessed Virgin Mary "troubled" at the angelical message announcing that she should be the mother of the Messiah?* (Luke i.)

Because, as appears from the ancient commentators, she had devoted herself to a life of virginity, and she did not

immediately apprehend how her condition as a mother could be compatible with the maintenance of that vow.

653. The angel saw the trouble of her mind, and to appease it informed her that she should conceive by the miraculous power of God, and that her child should be holy, and be called "the Son of God." As a confirmation of her faith in this announcement, she was also told by the angel that her cousin Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias the priest, who was now far advanced in years, had conceived a son, and that the time was not far off when her reproach among women should cease.

654. *Why is the angelical message to the blessed Virgin Mary called the Annunciation?* (Luke i.)

Because, although the word in a general sense expressed the communication of important intelligence by chosen messengers from heaven, it became at a very early period of Christianity restricted to the announcement of the miraculous conception of our Saviour, on account of the overwhelming importance of that message above all others, whether of the old or the new dispensation.

655. So highly was the fact regarded in the early ages that a festival, or day specially set apart for the consideration and honour of the Annunciation, was appointed for it as early as the 7th century; but sermons of St. Athanasias are spoken of which, being of an earlier date, prove its observance long before. The 25th of March, or Lady Day, is that observed in reference to the event.

656. *Who was St. Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus Christ?*

He was "a just man," a Jew of the house and family of David, and by trade a carpenter.

657. *Why was his occupation of carpenter no disgrace to St. Joseph?*

Because among the ancient Jews all handicrafts were held in so much honour that they were learned and pursued by the first men of the nation.

658. *Why have several attempts been made by old commentators to prove that Joseph and our Lord were not carpenters but goldsmiths?*

Because of the erroneous impression that the latter calling

* A.C., After Christ.—This form of abbreviation has been adopted in preference to the Latin A.D. or Anno Domini.

was more honourable than the former, and because the words of the original MS. are capable of that construction.

659. *Why is it most reasonable to conclude that St. Joseph was a carpenter, and not anything else?*

Because the overwhelming evidence of tradition goes to prove it.

660. Schleusner asserts that the universal testimony of the ancient Church represents our Lord as being a carpenter's son. Justin Martyr says that our Lord, in conjunction with his foster-father, made yokes and ploughs. Only those ignorant of ancient usages could find fault with this arrangement of Providence. Julian the Apostate affected to laugh at the menial position of Jesus Christ; and it is recorded of Libanius, one of that emperor's officers, that he demanded jestingly of a hermit what *the Carpenter's Son* was at that moment doing. The hermit replied, dryly, "He is engaged upon a coffin for Julian." The emperor died very shortly after this, while engaged in an Eastern battle.

661. *Why has the name of Elizabeth, the mother of the Baptist, a significant character?*

Because its equivalent, Elisheba, was the name of the wife of Aaron, the head of the priesthood, and, hence, was a link between the sacerdotal orders of the Old and New Testaments.

662. *Why did the mother of Jesus visit her cousin, St. Elizabeth?*

Because, understanding from the angel that the latter had conceived, she was desirous of seeing and congratulating her.

663. *Why did the child of Elizabeth, as yet unborn, "leap" at the approach of the mother of Jesus?*

Because, being presanctified and miraculously informed of the presence of his future Saviour, he took that mode of showing his joy.

664. Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months, till the Baptist was born and circumcised, and then returned to her own house at Nazareth.

665. *Why was Joseph at first troubled at the maternal appearance of Mary?*

Because, previous to the angel's warning visit, he was ignorant of the miraculous conception of Jesus.

A.C. 1.—The Angels and the Shepherds.

666. *Why were Mary and Joseph obliged to remove from Nazareth to Bethlehem?*

Because of an edict which went forth from Augustus Cæsar, ordering a complete census of the Roman empire to be taken, and which forced them to go to their native city to be enrolled.

637. After many long and violent struggles for superiority amongst the Roman chiefs, the whole world was then in peace, under the command of Augustus Cæsar. A census being ordered to be taken, Mary and Joseph being of the house and family of David, must needs present themselves before the appointed officers at their own town. A long journey in December, when short days and the wintry season incommoded the most sturdy traveller, was necessarily attended with great inconvenience to a delicate woman in Mary's condition; but in the emperor's edict she adored the hand of God, and respectfully submitted to his divine pleasure.

668. *Why were Mary and Joseph forced to lodge in a stable at Bethlehem?*

Because, being come to that city, they found, from the great concourse of visitors, that all the inns and private lodgings were full.

669. In vain did Joseph anxiously seek through Bethlehem for a shelter in some degree adequate to the dignity of his espoused wife and the necessities of her situation. They were forced to be content with a shed, beneath which they screened themselves against the inclemency of the night. This was the place and these were the circumstances in which our divine Redeemer chose to appear. When the night had finished half its course, and the whole creation lay hushed in silence, when the hour was come for the Eternal Word *to be born in time*, the virgin brought forth her first-born son, wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in the manger.

670. *Why was the first public notification of the birth of Christ given to simple and humble shepherds, and not to their superiors in rank and education among the Jews?*

Because the very character of the new dispensation—the

gospel which was to be preached to the poor—demanded this preference.

671. *Why did the mother of Jesus go with St. Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem?*

Because it was the custom among the Jews to be numbered according to their tribes and families. Being of the house and family of David, they were obliged to present themselves at Bethlehem, "the city of David," where the appointed registrar was sitting.

672. This journey was a painful one on several accounts for Joseph and Mary: the delicate condition of the latter—the poverty of their equipage, which had to be exposed to the gaze of the more wealthy members of the kingly family—the inclemency of the season, it being the depth of winter—all concurred to exercise their faith and patience. But thus the ways of Providence were brought about, and the prophecies fulfilled.

673. *Why was the name Ephratah affixed to that of Bethlehem?*

Because that was the ancient name of the town. It signified "fruitful." When the word Bethlehem came into use the latter term was joined to it.

674. *Why was Jesus Christ laid in a manger?*

Because it had been so prophesied, and it was the purpose of his heavenly father to exhibit the Saviour of mankind in the humblest possible position.

675. On the eastern side of the town of Bethlehem there was a cave cut in the side of a rock, in which was a manger, used by the people of those environs, so that the shepherds easily understood the angel who told them they should find him laid in a manger. It is the common tradition that an ox and an ass were in the joint occupancy of the stable at the time of the shepherds' visit.

In the neighbourhood of Bethlehem shepherds were standing continually upon the watch to guard their flocks from wild animals, and from robbers. These shepherds were not owners, but merely poor hired servants, who earned a scanty subsistence by their labour.

676. *Why did the angelic messenger address the shepherds with the words "Fear not"?*

Because the unusual spectacle, as it is described by the evangelist Luke (ii. 10), accompanied as it was with a great light, must necessarily have appalled them.

A.C. 1.—Adoration of the "Magi."

677. The great light surrounding the angel symbolized the glory of the New Testament doctrines, and was a literal fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah ix. 2: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light."

678. *Why is Anna the prophetess so called, seeing that the race of the prophets had ceased for several hundred years?*

She was so called out of reverence for her character and virtues, having lived in the temple probably for half a century, serving God with fastings and prayers night and day.

679. *Why was Christ's second manifestation to the Gentiles—or "the Magi"—and not to the Jews?*

Because the latter had, by their leaders, universally apostatized from a spiritual worship, and this rebuke was sent for their punishment.

680. At the period of Christ's advent, Judea was in the lowest imaginable state of oppression and abjection; for four hundred years the voices of their prophets and priests had been silent, the voice of the Maccabees only breaking the silence in words of hope and consolation. But even the language of these men, inferior as it was to their inspired forefathers, was not the language of the people. The priests, who still retained some power, were but a poor, worthless race; mean-spirited, ungenerous, envious, cruel, and oppressive. Not a word could be said in praise of any of those who discharged public functions. A few, indeed, prayed in secret, and hoped for some great blessing to spring like light from a morning which is overclouded; but the representatives of the Hebrew polity were sunk in lethargic listlessness, like a patient in that comatose state which precedes dissolution.

681. *Why did the angels sing "peace on earth, good will to men"?*

Because it was a leading characteristic of the gospel to bring peace, whereas the preceding covenant had been of a very different tendency.

682. *Why did our Saviour submit himself to the rite of circumcision?*

1. Because, as a descendant of Abraham, he was bound by the law until its supercession. 2. Because he would give his followers an example of obedience to ordinances.

683. *Why did our Saviour receive the name of Jesus?*

Because he was to be the saviour of the world, the name signifying a saviour.

A.C. 1.—The Star in the East.

684. *Why is our Saviour called Jesus Christ?*

Because he is thus pointed out as the anointed one, the great deliverer, king, priest, and prophet, who was to come and to fulfil all righteousness.

685. When we say that Jesus is the Christ, we, in effect, say, "This is He of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets wrote; the seed of the woman who was to bruise the head of the serpent; the seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; the great prophet to be raised up like unto Moses, whom all were to hear and obey; the priest, after the order of Melchizedek; the rod out of the stem of Jesse, which should stand for an ensign of the people, to which the Gentiles should seek; the Virgin's son, whose name should be called Immanuel; the branch of Jehovah; the angel of the covenant; the Lord of the temple, etc., etc., whose appropriate appellations should be 'Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.'" (Isaiah ix. 6.) All this is implied in saying that Jesus is the Christ. In the plainer language of the New Testament, Jesus Christ means "God manifest in the flesh." (1 Timothy iii. 16.)

686. *Why did the Magi, or wise men from the east, come to adore the infant Saviour?*

Because, while devoutly looking forward to the advent of the Messiah, they were miraculously advertised of his birth by the appearance of a star.

687. How this star was a means of conveying to them the necessary information we know not. The wise men declare to the Jewish leaders, "we have seen his star in the east, and have come to adore him;" but they do not explain further. They knew it to be his star, either by some prophecy or by Divine revelation. That they were kings is the prevalent opinion. Prophecy had said that such should come from afar to visit the infant Saviour. Being eager to find this new-born king they follow the star. At Jerusalem the star disappears, and they make inquiries of the priests. These inform them that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem—"And thou, Bethlehem-Ephratah," etc. Accordingly they direct their steps thither, and immediately the star reappears, leading them forward, until it finally rests over the spot where the object of their wishes and journeyings was reposing.

688. *Why, although our Saviour was born in a stable and laid in a manger, are the Magi, or wise men, represented* (Matt. ii. 11) *as "entering the house to adore" him?*

Because, after the birth had taken place the holy family were enabled to obtain a more suitable dwelling, in consequence of the multitude of visitors to Bethlehem (on account of the enrollment) having, for the most part, returned to their homes

A.C. 1.—Herod's Cruelty.

689. *Why did the Magi offer to Jesus Christ "gold, frankincense, and myrrh"?*

Because, in the figurative style of the eastern nations, they thereby typified (by Divine illumination) his three-fold character as king (by the gold), God (by the incense), and man (by the myrrh). The latter being the chief material used in embalming.

690. *Why was Herod troubled when he knew that the Magi were seeking for a new-born king?*

Because, while their Jewish people and the Sanhedrim looked for the coming of an earthly deliverer, he, as the king *de facto* of Judea, dreaded the rising of a power inimical to his own, and probably subversive of it.

691. The conduct of the Jewish doctors on that important occasion was most unaccountable. They told Herod, when he inquired of them, that Bethlehem was the place where he might find the infant. They cited him the very passage out of the prophet, but maliciously suppressed the latter part of the prophecy, which would have informed him that no temporal crown could be the object of Him, who was from the beginning and "whose coming forth was from eternity." Herod having thus received from the doctors the information he wanted, sent for the Magi. He told them to test the information received, and to bring him word back. But being warned of God in a dream, they, after their visit to the heavenly crib, departed to their own land by another road.

692. *Why did Herod give orders for the slaughter of the innocents of Bethlehem?*

Because he considered himself mocked by the wise men, and sought, by a general massacre, to destroy the infant Saviour.

693. The Scripture (Matt. ii. 16) says, "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men."

694. *Why did the mother of Jesus, who remained a pure virgin, present herself at the temple for the purposes of "purification"?* (Luke ii.)

Because, as her Divine Son had submitted to the Mosaical law of circumcision, she would be equally subject to the law of purification.

A.C. 1.—Meaning of "Nunc Dimitis."

695. She knew, indeed, that the law could not affect her, but she also knew tha the public was not then acquainted with her singular privileges. Upon the same occasion Mary had to present her Son in the temple, and to redeem Him from its service by means of a ransom, which in her circumstances was the offering of two doves. This was in memory of what happened to the first-born in Egypt, when the Israelites were delivered from thence. The Levitical law ordained that every first-born son should be consecrated to the Lord, or redeemed by a stated price, viz., for the rich a lamb, for the poor a pair of turtle-doves.

696. *Why is it usual to bow or bend the head at the mention of the name of Jesus?*

Because of the universally received interpretation of a passage in Philippians ii. 10, "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and of things under the earth."

697. A mark of the universal reverence with which this name is received among Christians, and, indeed, throughout the whole civilized world, is observable in the fact that since the birth of our Saviour it has been withdrawn from common use. Previous to that event no name was of more prevalent use among Jews and other oriental nations. At the time of our Lord's nativity, the name of Jesus was, perhaps, the commonest appellation in Palestine. Hence the second name, "Jesus *of Nazareth*," "Jesus *who is called Christ*," for distinction sake.

698. *What was the occasion of the Song of Simeon, or what is known as the anthem, "Nunc Dimittis"?*

It was as follows:—There lived at that time in Jerusalem a pious man, named Simeon, who waited for "the Consolation of Israel," that is, the Messiah; and it had been revealed to him that, ere he left the world, his eyes should be gladdened with a sight of Him.

699. By a secret inspiration he came into the temple, at the very moment that Jesus was brought thither by his parents. Filled with faith and joy, he approached the holy family, and took the infant up in his arms, at the same time giving utterance to the beautiful canticle, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

700. *Why is the aged Simeon described as waiting for "the Consolation of Israel"?*

Because the Jews were accustomed to style the expected Messiah *the Consolation.*

701. "*May I never see the Consolation*" was, and is, a common mode of swearing among them.

A.C. 1.—The Flight into Egypt.

702. *Why did the holy family fly into Egypt?*

Because of the anger of Herod, and in order to escape its consequences.

703. An angel in the night informed Joseph of the murderous design that this wretched king had upon the life of Jesus; accordingly, without hesitation, he arises, saddles the humble beast which affords to the holy family their only means of transit, and departs. Nor was their journey a mere change of residence from one friendly country to another; they were ordered to go to Egypt, an idolatrous land, and one that was the least friendly to the Hebrew people. There, amid strangers, and surrounded by all the concomitants of poverty, did the Saviour of the world condescend to pass the first years of his earthly life.

704. *Why is the name of Herod applied in the New Testament to different persons, without the distinguishing marks, First, Second, Third* (I., II., III.)*?*

Because it was the common name of the Herodian family, each male member of which was called by it, in the same way as Pharaoh was the common name for a dynasty of kings in Egypt.

705. The Herods who ruled during the events narrated in the Gospels were the four following:—Herod, called "the great," and his three sons, Archelaus, Philip, and Antipas. Herod the Great, who was also called Herod the Idumean, was sole ruler of Judea under the Romans. To his sons he left the kingdom, thus divided:—Archelaus ruled Judea, Idumea, and Samaria; Philip, Balanea, Trachonitis, etc.; Antipas, Galilee and Perea.

706. *Why did Herod, for so comparatively small an object as the removal of one infant, commit such a wholesale slaughter as the murder of the innocents of Bethlehem?*

It was his usual mode of proceeding under such circumstances. History informs us that, to attain his end, he never hesitated to imbrue his hands in blood, even in that of his nearest relatives.

707. The following bloody deeds will show that the slaying of the infants was in perfect accordance with the character of Herod; the account is taken from Josephus, as arranged by Dr. Lardner:—Aristobulus, brother of his wife Mariamne, was murdered by his direction at eighteen years of age, because the people of Jerusalem had shown some affection for his person. In the seventh year of his reign he put to death Hyrcanus, grandfather of Mariamne, then eighty years of age, and who had formerly saved Herod's life, a man who had, in every revolution of fortune, shown a mild and peaceable disposition. His wife Mariamne, described by all as amiable and beautiful, had a public execution, and her mother Alexandra

A.C. 3.—Miserable Death of Herod.

soon followed her. Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, were strangled in prison by his orders, upon groundless suspicions, when they were at man's estate, were married, and had children. In his last sickness, a little before he died, he sent orders throughout Judea requiring the presence of all the chief men of the nation at Jericho. His orders were obeyed, for they were enforced with no less a penalty than that of death. Arrived at Jericho, he had them all shut up in the circus, and calling for his sister Salome and her husband Alexis, he said to them, "My life is now short; I know the Jewish people, and that nothing will please them better than my death. You have them now in your custody: as soon as the breath is out of my body, and before my decease can be known, do you let in the soldiers upon them, and kill them. All Judea, then, and every family, will, though unwillingly, mourn at my death." Nay, Josephus says that, with tears in his eyes, he conjured them, by their love to him, not to fail in doing him this honour. What wonder, then, after this account, at his murdering wholesale the infants of Bethlehem? Surely there could be no cruelty, barbarity, or horrid deed which such a man was not capable of perpetrating.

708. *What was the cause of Herod's death?*

He suffered from a most dreadful disease, a kind of continued inflammation of the bowels, which terminated in a slow mortification.

709. According to Josephus, a devouring fire seemed to rage within him, and his pains were unutterable, whilst his inner party underwent a constant dying and corruption. His person became loathsome to all who approached him, and he was consumed by a fierce hunger which nothing could appease. This kind of malady was regarded by the Jewish people as a chastisement specially reserved by God for the punishment of unrighteous and tyrannous kings, and as such was inflicted upon Herod.

710. *Why did the Holy Family return to Nazareth instead of Bethlehem?*

Because, although informed by an angelical messenger of the death of Herod, they knew that his son Archelaus reigned in his stead, and they feared that some danger still existed should they reside in Judea.

711. That the mother and foster-father of Jesus were following thus the Divine direction is evident from the allusion made to this sojourn in Nazareth by the evangelist (Matt. ii. 23), who makes it a fulfilment of the prophecy, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

712. *Why was Jesus Christ, who did not, like the Baptist, follow the observances of that order, called a Nazarene?*

Because by that term was frequently meant nothing more than a person of no estate—one of no account—a mean individual.

A.C. 12.—Jesus lost by his parents.

713. *Why was Archelaus deposed?*

Because his tyrannous character and conduct rendered him hateful to the Jews; they made some very strong and united complaints to the Emperor Augustus, who, finding their remonstrances to be just, banished him (A.C. 7.) to Vienne in Gaul.

714. *Why did the Jews acquiesce in the change which, while it constituted Judea a Roman province, took away the last shadow of independence from the nation?*

1. Because, although hating the Roman yoke equally with that of any other alien power, they preferred it to that of Archelaus or any member of the Herodian family. 2. They unwittingly thereby carried out the views of Providence in the fulfilment of prophecy.

715. See Gen. xlix. 10—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet *until Shiloh come.*" The Messiah, or Shiloh, had now come, and the prophecy had to be, to the merest "jot and tittle," verified.

716. *How did it happen that Jesus was lost by his parents when, at twelve years of age, he went up with them to the passover at Jerusalem?*

It might have happened thus: In these journeys the men formed a separate company to the women, and the children who had attained the legal age, and accompanied their elders, went indifferently with either company. Thus, Jesus would be occasionally found with Joseph, and occasionally with Mary. And he might easily have been left behind without exciting apprehension, each company presuming that he was with the other.

717. Jesus was found in the *court* of the temple, because, not being a Levite, he could not enter into the temple itself. His disputation with the doctors was such as became a child. There is no reason to suppose that he listened, or asked questions in any but the most respectful manner.

Another reason why Jesus should have been missed by his loving mother and foster-father was, that at such a time the city of Jerusalem was immensely crowded. It was then the city not of the tribe of Judah, but of the whole people of Jewry. Every street and square, every house, and even the courts of the houses were filled with visitors. The utmost hospitality prevailed, one family or party eating, dwelling, sleeping, with another, and a kind of community of goods for the time prevailing. As those who came from a distance had no need to bring with them any provision

for the journey, so in departing there was nothing to collect and pack up. Hence Jesus was not so anxiously looked for by his parents, as ordinarily he would have been.

718. *Why was Jesus Christ accompanied to Jerusalem by his mother, seeing that by the law women were not required to make the journey?*

Because, although the letter of the law did not require it, the custom was for a child, when making his first visit to Jerusalem, in accordance with the precept, to be accompanied by his mother.

719. This visit formed an era in the life of a Jewish youth. The son then assumed one of the responsible obligations of manhood. It was a period answerable, in some respects, to that of confirmation among Christian children of the Protestant Episcopal, and Lutheran Churches. It was, therefore, one of those occasions in which a mother would naturally take a part.

720. *Why is so little narrated of the life of Jesus during the thirty years that he sojourned with his parents at Nazareth?*

Because the object of the evangelists was to give an account of his public life only, not of that portion which he passed privately.

721. It is said that Jesus went down to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph, and was subject to them. The meaning of which is understood to be, that he performed the duty of a faithful and obedient son; and not improbably was engaged in the trade of his foster-father—that of a carpenter. Every Jew was required to learn a trade, and, consequently, to do so was not considered derogatory even to one who was of the house and family of David. If industry is honourable in itself, how greatly is even a mechanical occupation elevated by the example of our Saviour.

722. *Why did Jesus Christ, foreseeing the reproach that would attach to the name of Nazarene, choose to reside in that town for nearly thirty years of his earthly life?*

Because it was his purpose to lay the foundations of his Church in humility, and out of the weak things of this world to confound the strong.

723. The whole purpose of the New Testament morality, as regards this life, was to exalt the consideration of poverty and a mean station. In order to this, Jesus chooses to be born of poor parents, in a poor mean stable; to dwell for many years in a miserable town; to elect his first followers from the middle and lower ranks of society; to set up the simplicity of childhood as the highest model for imitation; and, to consummate all his teaching, by dying the most ignominous death which he could suffer.

A.C. 12—30.—St. John the Baptist.

724. *Why was St. John the Baptist from his childhood in the desert?** (Luke i. 80.)

The reason why he secluded himself thus early has been believed to be, that he feared the cruelty of Herod.

725. For though he was not under his jurisdiction, not being on the confines of Bethlehem, yet on account of the remarkable events that took place at his birth, by which he was declared the forerunner of the Messiah, he had reason to dread the cruelty of the jealous and suspicious king. It is said that when he was yet in his mother's arms St. John was conveyed into the desert, and there concealed in the caves and fissures of the rocks, where people usually concealed themselves on the approach of their enemies. His mother, St. Elizabeth, died very soon after this flight, and the infant Baptist was nursed by some member of Zacharias' family.

726. *Why was John the Baptist reared as a Nazarite?*

Because that was the strictest order among the Jews, enabling the recipient of its obligations to live a more retired life, and one consequently less liable to distractions; and so was a means of preparing him as a minister destined to preach repentance to the Jews.

727. The parents of the Baptist were not only of the priestly order, but righteous and devout. That Zacharias was fully aware of the high mission of his son is evident from the "divine song" to which he gives utterance, and in which occurs the phrase, "And thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." As a consequence of the lofty influences under which he was nurtured, the child waxed strong in spirit, and "he was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke i. 80).

728. *Why is John the Baptist represented as eating "locusts and wild honey"?*

In order to show that his ordinary manner of living was consistent with his appearance and attire—that he lived like the poorest of the people, the inhabitants of the deserts and the other less frequented parts of Judea.

729. The inmates of some of the oriental monasteries are said to subsist upon locusts four months out of the year. In Bushire they are used by the lowest peasantry for food. The Arabs feed on them to this day, and prepare them for

* "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel"—*i. e.*, till he was thirty years of age.

A.C. 30.—The Baptist's first ministration.

use in the following manner:—They grind them to flour in their hand-mills, or powder them in stone mortars. This flour they mix with water to the consistency of dough, and make thin cakes of it, which they bake like other bread on a heated girdle; and this serves instead of bread to support life, for want of something better. At other times they boil them in water, and afterwards stew them with butter, and make a sort of fricassee, which has no bad taste.

730. *Why was John the Baptist dressed in a raiment of camel's-hair, etc.?*

Because he had to exhibit in his person and manner the characteristics of the ancient Hebrew prophets, many of whom were thus arrayed.

731. In the fifteenth year of the Emperor Tiberius, John made his public appearance. The word of prophecy had been still for centuries, but once more the echoes of Judea resounded with the "voice of one that cried in the wilderness." Besides his austere appearance, his manner of life was suggestive of his office; he ate only what the desert spontaneously afforded—locusts and wild honey from the rock.

732. *Why did both our Lord and St. John the Baptist defer the commencement of their public ministry till they were thirty years of age?*

Because they thereby followed the regulation of the Jewish law. Although neither Christ nor his illustrious forerunner were properly subject to that law, they upon all occasions scrupulously observed its precepts.

733. *Why was John the Baptist said to prepare the way of the Lord?*

Because his mission was to familiarize the minds of the Jewish people, by his preaching and practice, with those evangelical maxims which were fully developed by our Saviour.

734. *Why did the Baptist speak of one "mightier than himself" coming after him, instead of plainly saying that his successor was the Messiah?*

The Jews were not prepared to receive his coming; he therefore wisely led them by degrees to the knowledge of what Divine Providence had designed them.

735. He yet secretly assures them that he is the Son of God. "I have baptized you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Mark i. 8).

A.C. 30.—Jesus at Nazareth.

736. *Why did the Baptist declare that he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of Christ's shoes?*

Because he thereby expressed, by a very forcible image, the infinitely superior dignity of our Saviour.

737. Annexed are some representations of the shoes worn at the time of our Lord. Shoes among the Hebrews, as well as the Greeks and Romans, commonly consisted of wooden or leathern soles, called in Greek and Latin sandals. They were bound to the sole of the foot by two ties, of which one went between the great and the next toe, and the other first round the heel, and then over the top of the foot, where it was united with the other "latchet." These sandals, used merely in walking, were put off on entering the tent or house, being left at the door or on the edge of the apartment. The unbinding of the ties and removal of the sandal was from old time the business of slaves. The newly-purchased slave, as a token of his condition, entered on his office by taking off his master's shoes and bearing them for some space after him; in consequence, the office was held to be so low that a Rabbinical saying runs thus: "All that a slave does for his master is a scholar to do for his teacher, save untying his sandals."

ROMAN FOOT-GEAR.

ROMAN BOOT.

738. *Why was John the Baptist declared to be less than the least in the kingdom of heaven?* (Matt. xi. 11.)

Because, as the last of the prophets, he was included in the Old Testament dispensation, which was immeasurably inferior to that of the New, signified by the kingdom of heaven.

739. *Why did our Lord, after the commencement of his ministry, reside so short a time at Nazareth?*

Because his countrymen were offended at his plain-speaking, as also with the poverty of his origin.

A.C. 30.—The Temptation in the Desert.

740. Accordingly, Jesus performed few miracles there, but resided during the latter years of his earthly life at Capernaum, a city which stood upon the shore of the sea of Galilee, in the borders of Zebulon and Naphtali.

741. *Why was the term Nazarene one of reproach?*

Because, as is generally supposed, of the meanness of the town of Nazareth and the poverty of its inhabitants, who were, for the most part, persons in the lowest rank of life and followed the humblest callings.

742. Calmet remarks that to say of a person he is a Nazarene was equivalent to saying, "He is vile, despicable, and low."

743. *Why was our Saviour tempted by the devil?*

Because he wished to give his followers and disciples an example how they should meet and resist temptation.

744. Why, it may be asked, was Satan suffered thus to insult the Son of God? Wherefore did the Redeemer permit his retirement to be thus disturbed by the malicious suggestions of the fiend? The answers are—1. He gave an instance of his own condescension and humiliation. 2. He thereby proved his power over the tempter. 3. He set an example of firmness and virtue to his followers. And 4. He here affords consolation to his suffering people, by showing not only that He himself was tempted, but is able to succour those who are tempted. Some of the Fathers say, that Satan, with all his power, was ignorant of the real purpose and character of Jesus Christ; that this knowledge had been concealed from him by the Divine judgment; and that his assaults in the wilderness were made in order to find out this secret. Mr. Maundrell, in his travels in the Holy Land, saw the place which was the scene of our Lord's temptation, and thus describes it:—"From this place (the Fountains of the Apostles) you proceed in an intricate way among hills and valleys interchangeably, and of a very barren aspect at present, but discovering signs of the labour of the husbandman in former times. After some hours' travel in this sort of road, you arrive at the mountainous desert. . . . . A most miserable, dry, barren place it is, consisting of high rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward."

745. *Why did Jesus fast forty days and forty nights?*

Because, as the Author and Introducer of the new law, he would correspond to the examples of Moses and Elijah, both of whom had acted in a similar manner on their entrance upon their ministrations.

746. The fast of Lent, formerly observed with great strictness by Christians, is derived from the forty days fast of our Saviour in the desert.

A.C. 30.—The First Miracle.

747. *Why did our Saviour change water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana, in Galilee?*

Because, during the entertainment, the supply of wine failed; which being perceived by Mary and mentioned to Jesus, he worked the miracle recorded by the evangelists; and which is noticed by them as the first beginning of miracles performed by Jesus in confirmation of his mission.

748. *Why was Jesus Christ called the Lamb of God?*

1. Because a lamb was the symbol of meekness. 2. Because our Lord was, in his own person, the fulfilment of the symbolical paschal Lamb.

749. With reference to the first, Isaiah had prophesied (liii. 7), "He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Upon the second point the words of the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world," are explicit, and admit of no equivocation. Hence the "Agnus Dei's," or representations of the Lamb on the cross—the latter surmounted with a flag as a token of victory (page 122), are universally understood to symbolize the character and office of Jesus Christ.

750. *Why did the Holy Ghost descend upon our Saviour in the form of a dove?*

Because the dove was among the Hebrews an emblem of purity, innocence, and gentleness. The form chosen here was intended to indicate the innocence, meekness, and tenderness of Jesus.

751. The descent of the Holy Ghost in this manner, with the accompanying voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son," were the signs of his Father's approbation, —and of his being set apart for the office of the Messiah. We are not to suppose that the gift of the Holy Ghost wrought any change in the recipient upon the present occasion, but only that this was an act of solemn separation for the work which was to be done by Jesus—an approval of his personal fitness. The dove had always been an object of honour in the Holy Land. It had been chosen for idolatrous worship by the Canaanitish people; but Moses, probably in order to teach these a lesson, had chosen the dove as an offering to Jehovah, and thus the idolaters saw the sacred bird continually caught, killed, and eaten by the Hebrews. In the choice of the dove by Noah, when he wished to ascertain whether the waters of the flood had subsided, we see an evidence of the probable origin of that veneration. King David, in Psalm lv. 6, makes some beautiful references to the dove; and the author of Solomon's Song continually uses the dove as a type of tenderness and affection.

A.C. 30.—Baptism of Jesus Christ.

752. *Why was St. John, the forerunner of Jesus, called the Baptist?*

Because he distinguished his ministry by exhorting all to be baptized.

753. Baptism, as a rite, was well known to the Jew before the appearance of St. John. It was imposed upon proselytes from heathenism, upon their admission to the Jewish Church.

754. *Why did our Saviour, who could not have needed it, suffer himself to receive baptism from St. John?*

Because, intending to establish baptism as an institution of the new law, he chose to give in his own person, an example of obedience to it.

755. *Why did the Baptist hesitate to administer the rite to Jesus?*

Because he knew of his Divine character, although he was ignorant of our Saviour's motive in coming to him.

756. The baptism of Jesus has usually been considered a striking manifestation of the doctrine of the Trinity, or the doctrine that there are Three Persons in the Divine nature. 1. There is the person of *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God, baptized in the Jordan, elsewhere declared to be equal with God (John x. 30). 2. The *Holy Spirit* descending in a bodily form upon our Saviour. The Holy Spirit is also equal with the Father, or is also God (Acts v. 3, 4). 3. *The Father* addressing the Son, and declaring that he is well pleased with Him. It is impossible to explain this transaction consistently in any other way than by supposing that there are three equal persons in the Divine nature or essence, and that each of these sustains important parts in the work of redeeming man.—(*Barnes*, on Matthew iii.)

757. *Why did Herod put St. John the Baptist to death?*

Because of a request of Herodias's daughter, which he had sworn to grant.

758. Herodias was daughter of Aristobulus and Berenice, and grand-daughter of Herod (surnamed the Great). Her first husband was her uncle Philip, by whom she had Salome; but he falling into disgrace, and being obliged to live privately, she left him and married his brother, Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, who offered her a palace and a crown. As St. John the Baptist censured this doubly incestuous marriage, Herod ordered him to be imprisoned. This punishment did not satisfy Herodias, who thirsted for his blood. Accordingly, she so arranged matters that, when the king was celebrating his birth-day with the principal persons of his court, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased him so well that he swore to give her whatever she would ask. In pursuance of the plot, she asked the head of the Baptist—to be served up on a platter. The king was

A.C. 30.—The Nazarenes oppose Jesus Christ.

troubled at this request, not from pity, but from superstition, supposing him to be some great magician, whose spells might injure him, but, on account of his oath, he sent and had the Baptist beheaded in prison. (A.C. 32.)

759. *Why did the people of Nazareth, at the first preaching of Jesus, seek to destroy him by throwing him from the eminence upon which their city was built?*

Because, in expounding the law and the prophets in their synagogue, he displeased them by the application.

760. The manner of the synagogue worship has been shown (par. 430). It should be added here, in explanation of the circumstance related in Luke iv. 16, that the readers were sometimes called upon to perform their functions, and sometimes presented themselves voluntarily. The persons, also, who addressed the people were not rabbins expressly appointed for the purpose, but were either invited from those present, or offered themselves.

Jesus, after his return from the desert, "came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.'"

761. *By what means did so remarkable a passage occur in the reading of Jesus Christ on this occasion?*

By this: that although the book to be read was selected by the rulers of the synagogue, the choice of any portion of the book remained with the reader. Hence, obviously, these passages were selected which referred to our Lord's immediate purpose and mission.

762. *Why, when Jesus closed the book and gave it again to the minister, were the eyes of all of them that were in the synagogue fastened upon him?*

Because, by an irrepressible impulse, the supernatural character of Jesus must have manifested itself in his words and manner.

763. It is impossible to imagine anything more striking than the appearance which our Saviour must have presented on this occasion. His beautiful and innocent face and form—the awful nature of the functions he had "from the beginning" been elected to perform, and now was upon the eve of performing—and the consciousness of which must have imprinted itself upon his features, blending dignity with pathos in his voice. Around him sit the degenerate representatives of his chosen people, who

recognize indeed the Son of Joseph the carpenter, but fail to discover the traits of him, "the desired of nations." At first, the evangelist says, "they wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." But soon the feeling gives place to hatred, when Jesus proceeds to apply the sad predictions of the prophets to them in their rejection of the Messiah; their reprobation, and the ultimate call of the Gentiles. Nothing now will do but to thrust out of the city, and to drown in his own blood the voice of the unwelcome preacher. But Jesus, "passing through the midst of them"—that is, becoming miraculously invisible to them—"went his way" (Luke iv. 30).

The mount of Precipitation, as it is now called, is about a mile and a half distant from Nazareth, according to Dr. Richardson, but two miles according to the observations made by Mr. Buckingham. The ancient town, in all probability, reached much further up the hill—perhaps a mile. "At this spot, on the right hand of the ravine, is shown," says Mr. Buckingham, "the rock to which the men of Nazareth are supposed to have conducted our Lord for the purpose of throwing him down. The rock is here perpendicular for about fifty feet, down which space it would be easy to hurl a person who should be unawares brought to the summit, and his perishing would be a very certain consequence."

"We went," says Hasselquist, "to see the hill from which the inhabitants of Nazareth were for throwing down Christ when he preached to them. This is a high, stony mountain, situated some gun-shots from Nazareth, consisting of the limestone common here, and full of fine plants. On the top, towards the south, is a steep rock, which is said to be the spot for which the hill is famous. It is terrible to behold, and fit for its purpose."

764. *Why did our Saviour hold his discourse with the woman of Samaria?*

Because to avoid the ferment which ensued upon the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist by Herod, he retired for a time out of the confines of Judea into Galilee. In his way he passed through Samaria, near the town of Sychar. Spent with heat and the fatigue of his journey, Jesus sat down by a well—known as Jacob's—thus encountering the Samaritan woman, and took that opportunity to introduce the gospel, through her means, to the people of the country.

765. He was thirsty, though his thirst seems to have been more mysterious than natural, and he asked her to let him drink. The woman, surprised to hear herself accosted by a Jew, remonstrates, and thus the beautiful homily is commenced which furnishes the subject of the fourth chapter of St. John's gospel.

766. *Why did the Jews "have no dealings with the Samaritans"?*

Because of an ancient hatred which existed between them, and which dated back as far as the rebuilding of the second temple under Zerubbabel.

A.C. 31—33.—Nicodemus.

767. It was the refusal of the Jews to allow the Samaritans to assist them in this work that gave rise to, or at least greatly embittered, this hatred. From that moment a deep enmity burned between the two races. It was the same refusal probably, and acts of mutual wrong ensuing, that stimulated the Samaritans not only to hinder the rebuilding of the temple and city, but to set up a temple of their own at mount Gerizim. Shechem, at its foot, became the metropolis of the Samaritans, and afforded a refuge to discontented or lawless Jews. Josephus accuses the Samaritans of professing themselves Jews, and descended from Joseph, when this might tend to their advantage; and of disclaiming all kindred and connection with them, when this would better serve their turn. Broils frequently occurred, and at length the temple on mount Gerizim was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, about 129 B.C., after having stood 200 years. Under the Roman pro-consul, Coponius, a Samaritan, in revenge for the ill done at Gerizim, entered Jerusalem secretly, and polluted the whole temple by scattering in it human bones. The name "Samaritan" now became a bye-word and a reproach with the Jews, and all intercourse with that people was avoided. Hence, for a term of the bitterest reproach, they called Jesus "a Samaritan;" and hence our Lord himself, when he sent out the seventy disciples, forbade them at first to go to the cities of the Samaritans, lest their reception of the gospel should be a stumbling-block in the way of the Jews.

768. *Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus by night?*

Because, being a distinguished member of the Sanhedrim, he did not wish to compromise himself with that body by coming openly to speak with Jesus, of whose person and office he was nevertheless anxious to learn something.

769. The discourse of our Lord to Nicodemus had a great effect upon his mind, although he does not appear to have been emboldened to profess his sentiments openly. Upon a subsequent occasion, at one of the sittings of the venerable body to which he belonged, he had the courage to protest against the bloody sentence which condemned him to the cross; and, after the crucifixion, he assisted Joseph of Arimathea in rendering the last honours to the body of his crucified Redeemer.

770. *Why is our Saviour represented as seated when delivering his sermon on the mount?*

Because sitting was the proper posture of masters and teachers.

771. The form in which the master and his disciples sat is thus described by Maimonides:—"The master sits at the head, or in the chief place, and the disciples before him in a circuit like a crown; so that all see the master and hear his words. The master may not sit upon a seat, and the scholars upon the ground; but either all upon the earth or upon seats. Indeed, from the beginning or formerly, the master used to sit and the disciples to stand; but before the destruction of the second temple, all used to teach their disciples sitting.

772. *What was the nature of the place called the Receipt*

of Customs, at which St. Matthew was seated when called by our Lord?

The publicans had houses or booths built for them at the foot of bridges, at the mouth of rivers, and by the sea-shore, where they took toll of passengers that went to and fro. Hence we read of the tickets or seals of the publicans, which, when a man had paid toll on one side of the river, were given him by the publican to show to him that sat on the other side, that it might appear he had paid. On these were written two great letters, larger than those in common use.

773. *Why did our Saviour forbid the practice of swearing "by thy head," etc.*

Because the ready recourse to oaths as a test of truth or a motive to integrity, argues a very low standard of morality. The gospel was to establish sincerity of purpose and a sense of justice, which should result from rectitude of heart and conscience.

774. It was a very common practice among the orientals to swear by the head or the life of the king. Joseph, following the fashion of Egypt, swore by the life of Pharaoh, and the oath is still used in various regions of the East. The most sacred oath among the Persians is "by the head of the king." In the time of our Lord it was a common practice among the Jews to swear by this form, and in all the various ways denounced by him.

A more serious fault which clung to the teaching of the Pharisees, and which was denounced in most severe terms by our Lord at a later period (Matt. xxiii. 16), was their equivocations in the matter of oaths. "Woe unto you, blind guides! which say, whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor."

"This was a very paradoxical distinction, and no one who heard their oaths could possibly divine it unless he happened to be initiated into the whole villany of the business. One would naturally entertain the very same idea concerning it which Christ expresses in his refutation of it, viz., that "the temple which consecrates the gold is of greater account, and belongs more immediately to God than the gold." But the foundation of the refined distinction made by the Pharisees was, that the gold was sanctified, but not the materials of the edifice. Again the Pharisees said, "If a man swear by the altar, it is no oath; but if he swear by the offering that is upon the altar, he is bound;" because, forsooth, the offering was consecrated, but the stones of the altar nothing more than common stones. But to this doctrine Jesus Christ, with equal reason, makes the following objection, that "the altar which sanctifies the offering is greater than the offering;" and he founds it on this unanswerable argument—"If I appear to swear, and use the language of an oath, my words, though, perhaps, otherwise equivocal, must be understood in the sense

A.C. 31—33.—The Money-changers expelled.

which they generally have in oaths. Thus, if I merely mention *heaven*, that word may have various meanings; it may mean heaven in the physical sense of the term—the blue atmosphere, or that unknown matter sometimes called 'ether;' but neither of these is God. When, however, I swear by heaven, every one understands me as regarding heaven in its relation towards God as his dwelling-place or as his throne, and thinks that I forbear pronouncing the name of God merely from reverential awe, and that in naming the throne of God I include the idea of him who sitteth upon it; so that I have really sworn by God. . . . . A most rational exposition, without which we can never in any compact be sure of understanding our neighbour's words, not even though he name the name of God in his oath, and swear without any mental reservation whatsoever, for the *syllables*, perhaps, might still be susceptible of another signification." (Michaelis.)

775. *Why does our Saviour promise a reward to the bestower of a cup of cold water, given to a disciple in his name?*

Because by that figure he intended to convey the regard he had for all acts of charity performed with a proper motive, and for the honour of God.

776. The offering of a cup of cold water is in the East an act of great value and significance. In India at the present day the Hindoos go sometimes a great way to fetch water, and then boil it, that it may not be hurtful to travellers who are hot. After this they stand from morning to night in some great road, where there is neither well nor rivulet, and offer it in honour of their gods, to be drunk by the passengers. Such necessary works of charity in these hot countries seem to have been practised by the more pious and humane Jews; and our Lord assures them that if they do this in his name they shall not lose their reward.

777. *Why were the money-changers expelled by our Lord from the temple?* (Matt. xxi. 12.)

Because they were usurers, and in their eagerness for gain had presumed to set up their tables within the walls of the temple. That their practices were corrupt is shown by the denunciation of our Saviour, who said, "My house is a house of *prayer*, but ye have made it a *den of thieves*."

778. Persons coming annually to Jerusalem to worship would frequently deposit money with them, to be returned to the owners upon their safe return home; thus avoiding the risk of robbery by the way. Others visiting Jerusalem exchanged foreign coins for those current in the city, in order to pay the half-shekel tribute (Exod. xxx. 3), allowing the money-dealers a per centage for the accommodation. The temple being the centre and cause of all this traffic, the money-changers, at first content to set up their booths in its neighbourhood, by degrees established themselves within the building itself. It was the tables of these traffickers

which were overturned by our Lord, upon the only occasion when we perceive any thing like severity in his manner.

779. *Who were the sellers of doves mentioned in the same passage?*

They were persons who supplied the worshippers at the temple with doves for offerings—"the burnt-offering and the sin-offering"—prescribed by the Mosaical law. (Lev. v. 7, xii. 6.)

780. "These persons should have obtained the doves at a more suitable time and place. In many instances, probably in most, this was done; but there was, as there will always be, a number of slack worshippers, who put off till the last moment the most necessary duties, like those foolish virgins mentioned in another gospel, who failed to provide themselves with oil for their lamps, trusting to the chapter of accidents or the benevolence of their friends for the necessary supply." (Stackhouse.)

781. *What was the pool of Bethesda?*

It is thought to have been a bath, from the fact that the blind, the maimed, and the withered were gathered around it; and from its having five porticoes, erected, no doubt, for the reception of the sick and infirm.

782. The name Bethesda, which is Greek, signifying a house of mercy, was probably applied to it on account of the many cures effected therein. It was situated on the northern side of the wall which surrounded the temple mount at Jerusalem. The waters do not appear to have had any medicinal efficacy apart from the simple one resulting from the use of ordinary water; hence the cures are declared to have been effected miraculously. At certain times an angel descended and "troubled the water," and the person who descended first after this operation upon the water was healed of whatever infirmity he might labour under.

783. *Why did our Saviour so frequently speak in parables?*

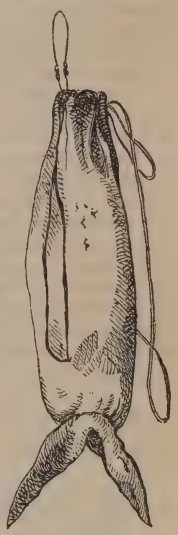
Because it was conformable to the customs of the East to do so, and was a very popular mode of conveying truths with the Jews.

784. Herein was also another fulfilment of prophecy. David, in Psalm lxxviii. 2, had said, speaking in the person of Jesus Christ, "I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old." Parables or fables are found in the literature of all nations, and it is certain that the parables of our Saviour have created a deeper and more lasting impression upon the great mass of mankind than any other part of the New Testament, with the exception of one or two passages. The good Samaritan, The Prodigal Son, the Ten Virgins, and Lazarus and Dives are known and appreciated throughout the whole Christian world. "The wisdom of our Lord, therefore, is manifest in adopting this mode of instruction. If a degree of obscurity attaches to it, even this is not without its uses; it is just that kind of

difficulty which is demanded by human nature for its trial, exercise, and improvement. It serves to discover who love the truth and who are indifferent to it; who are willing to search for it as for hidden treasure and who are not. It is admirably adapted, also, to excite attention, to stimulate curiosity, to exercise the judgment, and, through the medium of the imagination, to lodge truth permanently in the heart." (Watson.)

785. *Why was new wine not to be put into old bottles* (Matt. ix. 17)*?*

Because the Eastern bottle, called *turunthe,* is made of the raw hide of an animal; consequently, when any fermenting liquor is put into it, the skin, being comparatively green, distends itself to the swelling of the liquor; but should the bottle have been previously stretched by the same process, then it would burst if put to a second trial, because it cannot yield to the new pressure of fermentation.



EASTERN BOTTLE.

786. *Why did the minstrels and people "make a noise" in the ruler's house at the death of his daughter?*

Because such was the universal practice in the East upon all occasions of mourning, persons being set apart especially for such purposes, and following the art of mourning as a profession.

787. In Egypt the lower class call in women who play on the tabor, and whose business it is, like the hired mourners in other countries, to sing elegiac airs to the sound of that instrument, which they accompany with the most frightful distortions of their limbs. These women attend the corpse to the grave, intermixed with the female relatives and friends of the deceased, who commonly have their hair in the utmost disorder, their heads covered with dust, their faces daubed with indigo or at least rubbed with mud, and howling like maniacs. Such were the minstrels and people whom our Lord found in the house of the ruler. The noise and tumul of such retained mourners and the other attendants appear to have began immediately after the person expired. "The moment," says Chardin, "any one returns from a long journey or dies, his family burst into cries that may be heard twenty doors off; and this is renewed at different times, and continues many days, according to the vigour of the passions. Especially are these cries long and frightful in the case of death, for the mourning is right down despair, and an image of hell."

A.C. 31—33.—Nature of the Angels.

788. *What was the nature of that mustard-tree alluded to by our Lord, which was said to be "the greatest among herbs?"* (Matt. xiii. 31)

The character and size of the scriptural mustard-tree will be understood by the annexed extract:—

789. The parable of the mustard-tree was delivered in a public assembly, every individual of which was well acquainted with it. Many of them were the avowed enemies of our Lord, and would have gladly seized the opportunity of exposing him to the scorn of the multitude if he had committed any mistake. The silent acquiescence of the scribes and pharisees affords an irrefragable proof that his description is perfectly correct. They knew that the same account of the plant more than once occurs in the writings of their fathers. In the Babylonish Talmud, a Jewish rabbi writes that a certain man of Sichem had bequeathed to him by his father three boughs of mustard; one of which, broken off from the rest, yielded nine kabs of seed, and the wood of it was sufficient to cover the potter's house. Another rabbi in the Jerusalem Talmud says he had a stem of mustard in his garden, into which he could climb as into a fig-tree. After making every allowance for the hyperbolical style in which these talmudical writers indulged, they certainly referred to real appearances in nature; and no man will pretend that it was any part of their design to justify our Saviour's description. But the "birds of the air (verse 32) might certainly lodge with ease among the branches of a tree that was sufficiently strong to sustain the weight of a man. The fact asserted by our Lord is stated in the clearest terms by a Spanish historian, who says that in the province of Chili, in South America, the mustard grows to the size of a tree, and the birds lodge under its shade, and build their nests in its branches."—Paxton, *Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures.*

790. *Why are the angels—referred to in* Matt. xviii. 10—*described as always beholding the face of God in heaven?*

Because such a posture is indicative at once of an anxious wish to know, and a cordial readiness to execute, the will of a Lord or ruler.

791. This is illustrated by some other passages of Scripture thus:—1 Kings i. 20, "And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee that thou shouldst tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him." In Psa. cxxiii. 2, "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God." Our Saviour would, accordingly, intimate that such was the attitude of the angels in heaven, who are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.

792. *Why was our Saviour called the "Son of Man"?*

1. Because he is so called in the prophecy of Daniel vii.

13, 14, "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven; and there was given to him dominion and glory," etc. 2. Because he had a design to establish his human nature against those who might be disposed to regard him as a mere spirit or angel.

793. It is to be remarked that our Saviour himself uses the words of Daniel, above quoted, in Matt. xxvi. 31, "When *the Son of Man* shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him."

794. *Why were seventy disciples chosen by our Saviour?*

In the number, as in that of the twelve apostles (in reference to the number of the tribes), he may have had regard to the historical associations of the Hebrews, for we find that when Jacob went into Egypt the souls of his family were seventy.

795. The same was the number of the elders appointed by Moses. Seventy persons composed the Sanhedrim, or great national council of the Jews; and, according to the notions of the Hebrews of that day, the earth itself was made up of seventy nations. The mission of the seventy elders was of a preparatory nature, and what is said about it in the gospel occupies but a few lines.

796. *What was the Council of the Sanhedrim?*

It was the highest national tribunal or parliament held in Jerusalem at the time of our Lord.

797. The Sanhedrim was modelled upon the council of seventy elders appointed by Moses (Numb. xi. 16), came into existence after the return from Babylon, and is first mentioned by Josephus in the reign of Herod. According to the Mishnah, this court was composed of seventy members besides the president; these were high priests, elders, and lawyers, comprising Pharisees and Sadducees. In addition were two secretaries. Learning was the sole qualification for admission. The Sanhedrim, in urgent cases, assembled in the house of the high priest, but ordinarily sat in a separate chamber on the south side of the temple. The members sat in a semi-circle, with the president in the middle. This tribunal had been deprived of the power of life and death by the Romans.

798. *Why were the Pharisees called "whited sepulchres"?*

Because they concealed under a cloak of sanctity the real abominations of their hearts; professing a strict regard to the letter of the law while they were filled with malice, covetousness, and vain glory.

799. It was the custom with the Jews to garnish the outsides of the tombs of their relations and friends, although those who touched the dead were considered as polluted. In Acts xxiii. 3, St. Paul calls Ananias a *whited wall*, and threatens him with a violent death, an expression that proved prophetical, for Ananias, after having contributed to the ruin of his country by a powerful faction which he had raised, and which produced various calamities, was slain after the revolt of the Jews (A.D. 66), with his brother, and fell not by the arms of the Romans, but by another faction of the Jews, which was headed by his own son.

800. *Who were the Scribes?*

They were (1) writers, (2) lawyers, and (3) teachers of the law.

801. The names by which in the Greek this class is designated indicate a learned class which may have exercised functions more or less varying from each other; those variations, if they existed, can scarcely now be discovered, and in general the words indicate the same high officer whose business lay in the guardianship and exposition of the law of Moses, considered as the source of religious as well as civil rights and obligations.

802. *Why were the Scribes in general rebuked by our Lord?*

Because, by their sophistries, they had neutralized most of the beneficial provisions of the Mosaical code.

803. This code had received great additions from purely human sources. Its literal observance was strictly required. But an allegorical method of exposition had gained prevalence: hence the charge of our Lord, "Ye have made the law of God void by your traditions."

804. *Why were the Sadducees generally opposed to the preaching of the gospel?*

Because, as semi-infidels, they had a greater repugnance to its precepts than even the Pharisees and the rest of the Jews, who still retained the spirit of the Mosaical laws.

805. The Sadducees were a sect which had its rise (B.C. 250) from Sadoc, a follower of Antigonus Sochœus, president of the Sanhedrim. The latter had taught, in opposition to the Scribes, that man ought to serve God out of pure love, and not from hope of reward or fear of punishment. But Sadoc improving upon this (in *his* estimation), maintained that there was no future state at all, either of reward or punishment. Whatever foundation there may be for this account of the origin of the sect, it is certain that in the time of our Saviour the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the dead (Acts xxiii. 8) and the existence of angels and spirits, or souls of departed men. They carried their ideas of human freedom so far as to assert that men were absolutely masters of their own

actions, and at full liberty to do either good or evil. Josephus even says that they denied the essential difference between good and evil; and though they believed that God created and preserved the world, they seem to have denied his particular providence. These tenets, which resemble the Epicurean philosophy, led, as might be expected, to great profligacy of life; and we find the licentious wickedness of the Sadducees frequently condemned in the New Testament; yet they professed themselves obliged to observe the Mosaic law, because of the temporal rewards and punishments annexed to such observance; and hence they were always severe in their punishment of any crimes which tended to disturb the public tranquillity. Josephus says that the Sadducees were able to draw over to their party the rich only, the people not following them; and he elsewhere mentions that the sect spread chiefly among the young. The Sadducees were far less numerous than the Pharisees, but their greater opulence and dignity gave an equivalent weight to their party. The council before which our Saviour and St. Paul were carried consisted partly of Pharisees and partly of Sadducees.

806. *Who were the Pharisees?*

They were a powerful sect among the Jews, whose prominent characteristic was a strict literal observance of the Mosaical law, joined with the vast number of additions, which in the process of ages had become tacked on to it.

807. The sect appears to have had its rise during the Babylonish captivity. The silence of the prophets at that period, and the consequent absence of all positive authority in matters of the law, would naturally lead to the establishment of a school of interpreters, which, as being merely human, and basing all their philosophy upon reason, would produce results as various as the manifestations of the human mind are various. Hence the two chief sects of Pharisees and Sadducees. The former were the religious conservatives, the latter the progressists, or rational reformers. The Pharisees would have every jot and tittle of the law observed. But not only this: they had a tendency to collect traditions, which rapidly accumulating, in time became more bulky and stringent than the original law of Moses. And in the end we find our Saviour rebuking the sect by saying, "Woe unto you, Pharisees and Scribes, who make the law of none effect by your traditions." Their observances were, however, mere outward ones—of all sincere or heart worship they were totally devoid: they washed the outside of the cup or platter, but suffered the inside to be foul and filthy.

808. *What is the meaning of the word "Rabbi"?*

It signifies "the great," and was used as a complimentary expression when addressing a superior.

809. It was used to signify "doctor," "teacher," and very plentifully applied when a speaker had any purpose to gain. In its general sense its equivalent is to be found in the Italian "eccellenza." The teachers and professors of the law were distinguished by the title of Rabbi, both by the people and by their own

disciples. Our Lord was so addressed by his disciples as well as by the people. Rabboni, the superlative of Rabbi, was the title of highest honour applied by the Jews to the teachers of the law. In its application to Christ (John xx. 16) it signified "Lord."

810. *Why were the Publicans such objects of dislike to the Jews?*

1. Because, as tax-gatherers engaged in collecting the tribute imposed by their Roman conquerors, they were naturally so. 2. Because the Publicans themselves were generally dishonest and even rapacious characters.

811. There were two kinds of publicans (*publicani*). The first were persons of rank or wealth, who farmed the taxes from the chief authority at Rome, frequently being Roman knights or patricians; those, however, with whom the Jews most frequently came in contact were the *portitores*, or sub-collectors. This second class did not confine itself to collecting the regularly imposed taxes, but used such means as were within their reach to grind the faces of the people. Oppression and cruelty were commonly the result. The collection of taxes, in general an unpleasant office, becomes hateful and repulsive when tribute is levied for a foreign power. The odium is augmented if native hands are the collectors, and if the foreign yoke is galling. Hence in Judea none but persons of the lowest order would engage in the work, and hence those whom it occupied were hated and despised by the people; and that the more the nearer the days of the Messiah were thought to approach. The common tax-gatherers therefore, were accounted as apostates and renegades engaged in aiding the heathen to oppress and pillage God's chosen people. Thus is explained the amazement excited when Jesus was seen eating not only with pagans, but even with publicans.

812. *Why were the Jews particularly offended by the words of our Saviour* (John ii. 19), *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again"?*

Because they were sensitively alive to any disrespect—real or imaginary—uttered in reference to the temple at Jerusalem, to which, in their usual materialism, they understood our Lord to refer.

813. Of the high veneration of the Jews for this building many authors relate instances. Their reverence for it was such that rather than witness its defilement they would cheerfully submit to death. Josephus gives proof of this in his history of the wars of the Jews. Concluding that Jesus meant an insult to the sacred edifice, his words instantly descended into their hearts, and kept rankling there for years, until upon our Lord's trial this declaration—joined with others—which it was impossible for them even to forget or forgive, was alleged against him as an act of the most atrocious guilt and impiety.

Jewish Proselytes.

814. *Why did our Lord say, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God"?* (Matt. xix. 24.)

Because he wished to express by an image, which was very familiar to the Jews, a case of extreme difficulty, if not of impossibility.

815. To pass a camel through a needle's eye was a proverbial expression among the nations of high antiquity, denoting a difficulty which neither the art nor the power of man can surmount. Our Lord, to make his discourse plain, condescended to the very language of the people.

816. *Why were the Jews rebuked by our Saviour for their zeal in making proselytes?* (Matt. xxiii. 15.)

Because they were actuated by improper motives, as appears by the context, where a common result of their zeal is said to have been that the proselyte became two-fold more the child of hell than themselves.

817. The desire of making proselytes is one of the commonest instincts of humanity. What is rebuked here is the want of a good intention; the endeavour to change a man's faith or opinion not for *his* benefit or for the glory of God, but in order to flatter one's own choice of a party or following. The misdirected zeal of the Hebrews for proselytizing excited the notice and ridicule of the heathen Romans. Horace (among others) in his "Satires" (i. 4, 143), says, "Like Jews we will compel thee *to come over to our sect.*"

818. *Why did our Saviour blame them for building the tombs of the prophets?* (Matt. xxiii. 29.)

This is not blamed as if it were in itself an evil to build or adorn the sepulchres of the prophets; but the hypocrisy of the Pharisees is here taxed, who, whilst they pretended to honour the memory of the prophets, were persecuting to death the Lord of the prophets.

819. As indeed they had done by the prophets beforehand, scarcely one of whom had escaped a violent death at their hands. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One." (Acts vii. 52.)

820. *Why were the Pharisees said to devour widows' houses?*

They endeavoured to persuade the widows of the poor to make vows or offerings for the temple, by which they themselves became rich.

821. *Why did the disciples of Christ ask him, with reference to the man born blind, "Master, did this man sin or his parents, that he was born blind"?*

Because before the coming of Christ and the promulgation of his new and merciful dispensation every misfortune was regarded as a proof, more or less, of the anger of God towards the afflicted person, and not, as was taught by Christ and his apostles, a means which a Christian might improve to his eternal benefit.

822. The voluntary sufferings of Christ and the *canonization of affliction and martyrdom* by his example, and that of nearly all his immediate followers, changed this mode of thinking most completely. But they who now asked the questions were speaking according to the received ideas of their day, into which the Oriental heresy of the Metempsychosis, or the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, had infused an element. The people of Judea, and indeed of the whole Eastern world at that time, very commonly attributed—as they do to this day—their misfortunes to the transgressions of a former state of existence. "I remember," says Callaway, "being struck with the seriousness of a cripple, who attributed his lame condition to the unknown fault of a former life. His conjecture was that he had broken the leg of a fowl—which might have formed the outer casement of some ancestor, who should at least have been sacred from any injury on his part." Offerings are still made among the Hindoos, with a view to an honourable or happy birth at the next transmigration.

823. *Why did Jesus Christ command the blind men whom he had miraculously restored to sight to tell no man of the circumstance?* (Matt. ix. 30.)

Because, although he knew that they would fail to observe his injunction, he wished to give to all men an example of humility. We are admonished not only to keep silent ourselves upon whatever is to our own praise but to endeavour to hinder others from publishing it.

824. *Why did our Saviour, in sending his apostles to*

preach "to all nations," give them miraculous powers? (Matt. x. 1.)

Because the generality of men would never have given credit to their preaching, unlearned and illiterate as most of them were, had they not been able to work miracles in proof of the doctrines preached.

825. "It was necessary that the greatness of their works should confirm the greatness of their promises." (St. Jerome.)

826. *Why did our Saviour defend his disciples from those who complained of them that they did not fast like the disciples of the Baptist?* (Matt. ix. 14, 15.)

Christ, by the similitude of the cloth and bottles ("No man putteth new wine into old bottles," etc.), justified the manner of life which he taught his disciples as at first best adapted to their faith. Had he in the beginning required them to practise any rigorous observances, they might have been discouraged and have left him. He, accordingly, takes occasion to say that the joy of being in the presence of "the bridegroom" would not admit of any austerity; but the time for fasting would come when he should be taken away from them.

827. The bottles referred to were made of skin, or were leather bottles in which wine used to be carried and kept. (Par. 785.)

828. *Why did our Saviour warn his disciples against false teachers who should come to them in his name?*

Because he foresaw that hosts of pretenders to sanctity and true teaching would arise immediately after his death, and consequent upon the great success that would accompany the preaching of the gospel.

829. In less than two centuries after our Lord's death many false Christs actually appeared, each of whom pretended to be the one that was "to come," the desired of nations. One of these false Messiahs was a Jew, named Barchochebas. He appeared about the year A.D. 130, during the reign of the Emperor Adrian. The Jews, up to that time, had remained sunk, more or less, in a hopeless apathy. But now they seemed to have thrown it off, and made an attempt towards the recovery of their city. Adrian was well informed of these thoughts, and appointed builders to reconstruct the walls of Jerusalem, intending to make it a fortress or citadel, by means of which he could suppress any attempt at a

revolution on the part of the Jews. The works had made some progress when the Jews, unable any longer to endure the idea that their holy city should be occupied by foreigners, broke out into open rebellion. They were led by the above-mentioned Barchochebas, under whom, at first, they obtained some partial successes; but he was crushed by the Roman power, and a war scarcely inferior in horror to that under Vespasian and Titus was, like it, brought to a close by the capture of Jerusalem, of which the Jews had obtained possession.

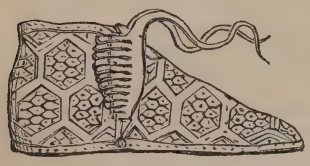
830. *Why did our Saviour bid his apostles when they were persecuted in one city to flee into another?* (Matt. x. 23.)

Because he would have them avoid strife and unseemly contentions with those who were unwilling to listen to their doctrines.

831. That this was his meaning the best proof may be found in the fact that he himself frequently set them the example of flight. He rendered himself invisible when the Nazarenes would have thrown him from the hill. He fled from the temple and hid himself from the Sanhedrim. In the early ages of the Church there were found some who deemed this counsel unworthy of a Christian. Tertullian held it as unlawful to fly from persecution. But the best proof that he was wrong is, that Tertullian himself fell away from the truth and relapsed into Montanism.

832. *Why were the apostles to set forth without two coats, without shoes, and without a staff?* (Matt. x. 10.)

That they might present the appearance of poverty and a complete disseverance from the world and its advantages.



ROMAN BOOT.

833. Sandals were permitted, and the ordinary staff used even by beggars to assist the body in walking, but not such a staff as was then used as a weapon of defence. The shoes then worn, as distinguished from sandals, were costly, and often very elegant in their form and material. They were, however, confined to effeminate persons and to women.

834. *What is meant by the "gates of hell," which should not prevail against the Church?* (Matt. xvi. 18.)

Gates are a common symbol in the Scriptures for power, government, security. To say, then, that the gates of hell should not prevail against the Church was, in other words, to say "it shall never die, it shall never be extinct."

835. All the errors, controversies, superstitions—all the persecutions, edicts, tortures with which the Church has been visited, have not proved her mortal, and never

shall. (Calmet.) "The keys of the kingdom of heaven" delivered to the Apostle Peter had a meaning, which is explained by the following passages:—1. As exercising authority—"I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder" (Isa. xxii. 22). 2. As having power to interpret the Divine oracles—"Ye have taken away the key of knowledge" (Luke xi. 52). Explaining the Scriptures is called opening them—"While He talked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 32). It is said that authority to explain the law and the prophets was given among the Jews by the delivery of a key; and of one Rabbi Samuel we read, that after his death they put his key and his tablets into his coffin, because he did not deserve to have a son to whom he might leave the insignia of his office. If the Jews really had such a custom in our Saviour's time, they would readily understand the significance of the delivery of the keys to St. Peter.

836. *Why did our Saviour, after the delivery of his charge to Peter, say to the apostles that they should tell no man that he was the Christ?*

1. To avoid the envy of the scribes, and not to appear to raise his own glory. 2. He wished the people to be induced to own him for their Messiah, not from the testimony of his retainers, but from his miracles and doctrines. 3. Because, as his time was not yet come, the apostles were not yet fit to deliver, nor the people to receive, this grand tenet.

837. *Why did our Saviour pronounce a pardon of the sins of the paralytic whom he had healed, seeing that the sick man did not ask him to do so?* (Matt. ix. 2.)

Because he wished to declare the cause of the disease, and to remove it before he removed the disease itself.

838. "The sick man begs for corporal health," says Jansen, "but Christ first restores to him the health of his soul; for two reasons: first, that he might insinuate to the beholders that the principal intent of his coming into the world was to cure the evils of the soul, and to let them know that the spiritual cure ought most to be desired and petitioned for." A second reason why Christ forgave the sick man his sins was, that he might take occasion, from the murmurs of the Pharisees, to speak more plainly of his power and divinity, which he proved, not only by restoring the man instantaneously to health, but by another miracle, equally great and conclusive, which consisted in seeing the thoughts they had never expressed; for the evangelist observes that they murmured in *their hearts*.

839. *Why was the paralytic, after being cured by our Saviour, commanded "to take up his bed and walk?"* (Matt. ix. 6.)

Because by that act he would demonstrate the reality of his

cure, and that it was no phantom, but a real patient, who had been the object of the compassion of Jesus Christ.

840. *Why does St. Matthew speak of himself in his gospel as "Matthew," and designate his previous occupation of a publican, while the other evangelists call him Levi?*

St. Matthew, according to St. Jerome, did this from a motive of humility. His co-apostles, out of respect to him, preferred to omit any allusion to his former position, as one that was held in great detestation among the Jews.

841. *Why is the possession of the gifts of prophecy and the power of working miracles no proof of the sanctity of the possessors?* (Matt. vii. 22, 23.)

Because these gifts have been enjoyed by bad men and unbelievers, as, for instance, Balaam, Caiaphas, the disobedient prophet, and others

842. The text says, verse 22, "Many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" And verse 23, "And then will I profess unto them I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." This is illustrated by other instances than the above cited. The witch of Endor could prophecy; most of the patriarchs also; the high-priest for the time being by virtue of his office; the "sybilline leaves" contained true prophecies; the oracles in the heathen temples occasionally spoke truth. As to miracles, Simon Magus could raise his body from the earth like a bird, to the astonishment of his followers, at the very moment when he was opposing the apostles.

843. *Why are the people or congregation in Scripture called sheep?* (John x. etc.)

Because the sheep is that creature which stands most (ordinarily) in want of a leader or guardian.

844. In Ezekiel xxxiv. 31, they are the emblems of men. As sheep need a shepherd, so men in a civil state require a ruler, governor, or legislator. It is the same in the associated state as believers in Christ; no church or society could long subsist without pastors. Jesus Christ calls himself the Good Shepherd. Vitringa notices also that as sheep are destined for slaughter, so the first followers of Jesus were destined to suffer martyrdom. St. Paul, quoting the Psalms, says (Rom. viii. 36), "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Every reader of primitive history knows that the majority of the early Christians were called to undergo with patience the most severe outrages from their unbelieving fellow-men, and to die for the truth's sake.

845. *Why does our Lord say* (John x. 4) *that his sheep know him, that he calls them by their names, and that they follow him?*

Because here (speaking allegorically of his true disciples) he uses an illustration very familiar to his oriental hearers as tenders of sheep, with whom the custom was to walk in front of their sheep—not behind them, as the practice is with us.

846. Travellers inform us that it is the usual practice in the East to do so, and that the sheep are still distinguished by name by their shepherd; but we need go no further than the Emerald Isle to learn that this practice may easily obtain. An Irish herd invariably walks in front of his charge, encouraging them by his voice, and calling them by name.

847. *What was the signification of the parabolic question, "If a man hath an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray," etc.?* (Matt. xviii. 12.)

By the "one sheep" is understood the whole human race, and by the ninety-nine the angels in heaven.

848. Jesus Christ manifests his tender regard and solicitude for us poor weak creatures, by becoming himself the Son of man; thus abandoning, in some measure, the angels who are in heaven. He is come down upon earth to save by his death what was lost, imitating thus with regard to men, the conduct they themselves observe with regard to their sheep.

849. *Why did our Saviour say, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name" he is "in the midst of them"?* (Matt. xviii. 20.)

To show the superior efficacy of public over private worship.

850. *Why did Jesus Christ heal the impotent man on a Sabbath-day, to the scandal of the Pharisees?* (John v.)

Because he wished to show that the ceremonial law, or rather its strict letter, was not to stand in the way of charity, or to hinder benevolent actions; which were to be performed, under every variety of circumstance, and in behalf of every class of men.

851. Jesus, having healed the paralyzed man, commanded him to take up his bed, and walk home. This was a new crime in the eyes of the Jews; benevolence

had no place in their bosoms; they persecuted Jesus, "and sought to slay him" (verse 16).

852. *Why did our Saviour permit the devils who had been cast out of a possessed man to enter into a herd of swine?* (Matt. viii. 32.)

The following reasons have been alleged:—1. To show that the devils had no power even over swine without his permission. 2. That such as were freed from their power might acknowledge the greatness of the favour done them, by seeing from how great a multitude (of demons) they had been liberated. 3. To punish those Jewish citizens who fed upon swine's flesh, contrary to the law. 4. To show how willingly the devils dwell in the hearts of those who are addicted to a voluptuous and carnal life, aptly designated by the swine. 5. That the owners of the swine might rise in opposition to Jesus Christ, preferring their temporal interests to their spiritual, and drive him out of their country.

853. The event showed the reasonableness of this view; the inhabitants "besought Jesus that he would depart out of their coasts."

854. *Why did our Saviour forbid the unclean spirits to proclaim their knowledge of him as the Messiah?* (Mark i. 25.)

Because he would not suffer the devils to be produced as witnesses of his divinity.

855. The fact recorded in the above text is repeated in verse 34, where, after casting out devils from some persons, he suffered them not to speak, "because they knew him." St. Augustine says that the devils knew that Jesus was the Christ who had been prophesied and prefigured by so many types, but that they knew this in a very imperfect degree; that is to say, they did not to its full extent appreciate his divinity, else they would never have persecuted to death and crucified the Lord of glory. It was to inform himself more fully upon this matter, that Satan presented himself before our Lord in the wilderness.

856. *Who were "the children" of the scribes and Pharisees, of whom our Lord speaks as having the power to cast out devils?** (Matt. xii. 27.)

Some by this text understand that there were in the Jewish

* "If I, by the finger of God, cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?"

church "exorcists," who had this power, that by invoking the holy name of God the devils were put to flight; others (as St. Chrysostom, Hom. 42) say that the apostles and disciples of Christ are here meant. These were all the children of Christ's accusers, and had already cast out devils in virtue of the power conferred upon them by their Divine Master.

857. Yet *they* had never been accused of casting out devils through Beelzebub; envy alone urged the enemies of Christ to accuse him of being in (an impossible) league with Satan,—using the power of hell to undermine itself!

858. *What is the meaning of the word "Beelzebub"?*

It was the name of a Philistine idol, but was applied by the Jews to Satan, the leader or prince of the powers of hell.

859. "Beelzebub" was a compound word, formed from *baal*, "a lord," "ruler," "governor," and *zebub*, "a fly." By the Jews the name was contemptuously altered to Beelzebu*l*, which meant a "dunghill king," or ruler; in Latin, *dominus stercoris*. The Jews were very fond of quibbling or playing upon words, and frequently altered the termination of names in order to throw contempt upon the bearers of them.

860. *Why did the woman who had an issue of blood hope to be cured by touching the hem of Christ's garment?* (Mark v. 28.)

Because, among the Jewish people, a particular virtue was habitually ascribed to the garments worn by prophets and others of reputed sanctity; as, for instance, the cloak of Elijah, by which many prodigies are recorded as having been wrought.

861. So far from this feeling, or rather faith, being discouraged by our Lord, the result of the woman's application in the complete and instantaneous cure of her malady, proves that he fully endorsed it; and after his resurrection, it will be seen that the apostles inherited in a large degree this transmissible miraculous power. In the Acts of the Apostles we read that handkerchiefs and aprons used by them were made the means, under Divine Providence, of curing diseases; even the "shadow of Peter passing by" was efficacious for the healing of the sick and the dispossession of demoniacs. (Acts v. 15, 16.)

862. *Why did our Saviour multiply the five loaves and two fishes into a sufficient quantity to feed five thousand persons in the desert?* (Matt. xiv. 15—21.)

1. Because he had compassion on the multitude, who had followed him patiently in order to hear his discourses, and

were for the most part unprovided with the means of refreshment. 2. Because he chose to embrace that opportunity of exhibiting his power as a divine person over the creatures of his providence by the miraculous multiplication of the food.

863. This was one of the greatest of Christ's miracles, and it was also one of the most significant. Leaving out of view the mystical meaning of the act, the miracle showed the kind and gentle character of Jesus Christ in its most striking light. The vast assemblage had followed the great Teacher, and appear to have quite forgotten to provide for the ordinary wants of their bodies. They were in a desert place; it was growing dark; the disciples were anxious that Jesus should dismiss the people while there was sufficient light for their return to the town; but he suggests to the disciples, "knowing what he would do," that they should provide for them. The surprise of the disciples may be imagined. They had a scanty store, barely sufficient for the immediate wants of Jesus and the few familiar friends who constantly attended him. He commanded the loaves and fishes to be brought to him, the people to be seated upon the grass. He invoked the name of his Heavenly Father, and distributed enough to fill and satisfy the wondering multitude.

864. *Why did our Saviour after this miracle immediately depart, going up into a mountain alone to pray?*

Because he wished to avoid the applause of those in whose behalf he had performed it.

865. *Why were the disciples, during the storm which ensued, alarmed at the appearance of Jesus walking upon the water?*

Because their fears had been greatly excited by the storm, and under their influence they failed to recognize the person of our Saviour.

866. *Why did St. Peter ask to be permitted to follow the example of his Master by walking upon the water?*

From an eagerness to join our Saviour's company, and a belief that at the command of Jesus he could do what to his mere human nature was impossible.

867. *Why did St. Peter begin to sink when at the command of Jesus he walked upon the lake?*

Because his first fervent faith began to cool; not that he lost it, but that he suffered his fears of the wind and waves to interrupt the confidence which he at first experienced.

868. As long as Peter had his eye and faith fixed on Christ the liquid element yielded not to his steps; but the moment he turns his thoughts on himself, his own weakness, and the violence of the wind and waves, he begins to lose confi-

A.C. 31—33.—The Lord's Prayer given.

dence, and on that account to sink. Again his faith saves him; he calls upon his Lord, who stretches forth his arm and takes hold of him.—(Jansen.)

By his confidence in God we learn what we can do by the divine assistance, and by his fear what we are of ourselves; also that no one receives from God the strength he stands in need of but he who feels that of himself he can do nothing. —(St. Augustine, Serm. 76.)

869. *Why did our Saviour "touch" the leper when he designed to heal him of his leprosy, when by the Jewish law such an act would render him legally unclean?*

Because he would thereby show to the Jews that although as a man he was obedient to the law, as God he was superior to it; the fact of the leprosy being at once miraculously cured being the best proof thereof.

870. According to the law the leper had to go through a number of tedious and fatiguing ceremonies previous to his hoping even to be cleansed. Probably the leper in question had complied with all the required rules laid down in his case, but had failed to reap any benefit from them. Now that He is instantaneously cleansed by our Lord, he is told to show his gratitude to God by a compliance with the legal conditions.

871. *Why was the "Lord's prayer" given?*

As an example of brevity, comprehensiveness, and simplicity; in contradistinction to the tedious and self-laudatory effusions used and recommended by the Pharisees and Jewish doctors.

872. That this was the reason for giving the "Our Father" may also be deduced from the fact that the only other model of a good prayer left to man by Jesus Christ is that put in the mouth of the Publican (Luke xviii. 13), and which consists of seven words only. Jahn* says:—"Our Lord's prayer is a selection of the most devotional and appropriate sentiments from the Jewish formularies extant in his time."

873. *Why were special directions given by our Lord with regard to the distribution of alms?*† (Matt. vi. 1.)

Because at that time the practice of alms-giving, which had been prescribed by the Mosaic law as a religious duty, had degenerated into an ostentatious and organized hypocrisy among the Jews, who used to summon the poor to a conspicuous part of the town or city by the aid of a trumpet.

* Biblical Archæology, § 396.

† "Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men." (Matt. vi. 2.)

A.C. 31—33.—Lazarus Restored to Life.

874 *What is meant by the sin against the Holy Ghost which should not be forgiven, "neither in this world, nor in the world that is to come"?* (Matt. xii. 31.)

By this sin is understood what is called "wilful blindness," or a shutting the eyes of the mind to evident truth.

875. "From its very nature this sin would be incapable of pardon; for as long as a man will not see that he needs pardon he will omit to ask for it, and thus he will never obtain it."—(Calmet.)

A great many discourses have been made upon this subject; even the greatest commentators admit the difficulty of the question. St. Augustine takes notice that this is one of the most mysterious passages in the Scriptures, as it seems to go against what is elsewhere stated, that there is no sin so heinous as to be beyond the reach of pardon.

876. *Who was Lazarus?*

He was an inhabitant of Bethany, the brother of Mary and Martha, in whose abode our Saviour stayed while preaching in that part of Judea.

877. Very few particulars are known of the career of this friend of Jesus; for that he held that favoured relationship to our Lord is evident by the evangelical narrative. Jesus is therein represented as weeping at the news of Lazarus's death, and it is the only example in the gospels of our Lord having shown such a token of regard for any of his disciples. Lazarus was thirty years old when the miracle recorded in John xii. was worked: he lived thirty years afterwards, and by some is said to have itinerated as an apostle in France. Many churches in that country are named after Lazarus, *e.g.*, St. Lazare at Paris.

878. *Why did the Jews seek to kill Lazarus, whom our Lord had restored to life after he had been more than four days dead?*

Because that, by reason of the miracle performed in his behalf, many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus.

879. The resuscitation of a person so well known as Lazarus was a work of Christ beyond measure great, and of all the miracles he had hitherto wrought undoubtedly the most stupendous. It is minutely described in John xi. The credit which Jesus obtained among the people by this illustrious act, of which the life and presence of Lazarus afforded a standing evidence, was gall and wormwood to the Sanhedrim. Accordingly they sought, by every or any means, to assassinate him. In this they were, however, completely foiled; Lazarus escaped to proclaim far and wide the doctrines and glory of Jesus Christ.

A.C. 31—33.—The Sentence upon Capernaum.

880. *Why were the friends of Lazarus, upon his being recalled to life by Jesus Christ, bidden to "loose him, and let him go"?* (John xi. 44.)

Because such was the nature of the methods used by the Jews in burial, that a corpse was completely bound and fettered by the grave-clothes.

881. The character of the Egyptian mode of sepulture is familiar to every one who has visited our national museums. The Jewish method differed to some extent from this; the process of embalming was gone through to a greater or lesser extent, according to the means of the friends of the deceased. In the case of Lazarus it would appear that embalmment was omitted. Martha and Mary were poor; and the fear expressed by them that, having been dead four days, his body would emit an offensive odour (ver. 39), would seem to preclude the notion. The corpse, after receiving the preliminary attentions—the ablutions, etc.—was enveloped in the grave-clothes. The disposition of these will be understood from the annexed cut. Sometimes these clothes were nothing more than the ordinary dress, or folds of linen cloth wrapped round the body, and a napkin about the head; at others a more elaborate shroud was used for the purpose, and was plain or ornamental, according to taste or other circumstances. In every case the body was completely imprisoned, and it will hence be easily seen how necessary it was that the revived Lazarus should receive assistance from the bystanders, in order that he might be "loosed" and "let go."

GRAVE-CLOTHES.

882. *Why did our Lord pronounce the severe sentence upon Capernaum?* (Luke x. 15.)

"Christ, having left Nazareth, made this city the usual place of his abode. There was no city in which he had preached so much or wrought so many miracles. On this account he said it was exalted to the heavens; but for its incredulity he declares that it shall be cast down even to hell."—(Calmet.)

883. *Why is the "woe" uttered by our Lord against Chorazin particularly noteworthy?*

Because for many hundreds of years no traces, not even the name, of this town, have been found; so that the fate of total obliteration appears to have long since overtaken it.

Children and "their Angels."

884. St. Jerome speaks of Chorazin as a town of Galilee, on the shores of the lake Tiberias; but no modern geographer or traveller has been able to find its site.

885. *Why is it said* (Matt. v. 18), "*Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled*"?

1. Because our Lord came to fulfil the intention of the ceremonial and typical parts of the law; until he had done so in his own person, no part of that law should be set aside. 2. Because, although the types (being accomplished) would cease, the moral law should last for ever, *i.e.*, until heaven and earth should pass away.

886. The word "jot" is here the *jod* of the Hebrew and the *iota* of the Greek. It is a small letter, and is used to signify the least, as *alpha* and *omega*, being the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, stand to represent "the first and last," "the beginning and the end"

887. *Why did the Jewish people present their children to Jesus, that "he might put his hands on them and pray"?* (Matt. xix. 13.)

It was the custom to present children to men reputed as holy, as it is now the custom for bishops and clerics to pray and give a blessing to others.

888. It was to the "elders" that these presentations took place. In all probability our Lord had a very serious and venerable appearance, notwithstanding his real youth, he being then not thirty-three years of age, or, according to the reckoning of some, not more than thirty-eight. It is said that among the children presented to our Saviour upon this or a similar occasion was the afterward illustrious Ignatius, bishop and martyr of Antioch.

889. *Why did our Saviour say, in reference to children, "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven"?* (Matt. xviii. 10.)

1. Because he thus advanced the strongest possible argument for their protection. 2. To show that there are such beings as "angel guardians."

890. The Jews at that time believed that men had their good angels, or angels appointed to be their guardians. (Gen. xl. 16.) St. Paul refers to this belief in the passage, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14.)

As to the belief of the early Church, St. Augustine says:—"I esteem it, O my God, an inestimable benefit that thou hast granted me an angel to guide me from

the moment of my birth to my death."—(St. Augustine, "Of the Love of God," cap. 12.)

891. *Why does our Saviour say that "it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish"* (Matt. xviii. 14), *while in another place he says that a great many will perish?* (Matt. vii. 13.)

There is no contradiction here, as will be seen by the statement of the case:—

892. "Here some may perhaps object, that since the Almighty does not wish any of his little ones to perish, he must consequently wish all to be saved, and therefore that all will be saved. Now this is not the case: the will of the Almighty is therefore sometimes frustrated in its effects, which is contrary to Scripture. The answer to this objection is, that in God we must distinguish two distinct wills—the one *antecedent*, the other *consequent*. A person wills a thing *antecedently* when he wills it merely as considered in itself; for instance, a prince wishes his subjects to live, inasmuch as they are all his subjects. But a person wills a thing *consequently* when he wills a thing in consideration of some particular circumstance. Thus, though the king wishes all his subjects to live, he nevertheless wills that some should die if they turn traitors, or disorganize the peace of society. In the same manner the Almighty wishes none of his little ones to perish, inasmuch as they are all his creatures, made to his own image, and destined for the kingdom of glory; though it is equally certain that he wills the eternal punishment of many who have turned away from his service, and followed iniquity. If this distinction is observed, it is easy to see what our Saviour meant when he said, that it was not the will of his father that any of these little ones should perish."—(John Damascenus.)

893. *Why was St. Peter, in answer to his question* (Matt xvii. 21), *told that he must forgive his offending brother seventy times seven,* i. e., *four hundred and ninety times?*

By that expression our Lord meant to say that there was to be no limit to the extension of our forgiveness to a brother; in other words, we are to pardon private injuries, though done ever so often.

894. St. Peter knew the Jews to be much given to the passion of revenge; he therefore thought it a great proof of superior virtue to be able to forgive seven times. It was for this reason he proposed this question to our Lord, who, to show how much he esteemed mutual charity, immediately gave him the above answer.

895. *Why did our Saviour seem to reject the petition of the Canaanitish woman, who besought his aid to cure her daughter?* (Matt. xv. 22—28.)

Because he wished to try her faith and power of perseverance.

St. Peter's Martyrdom predicted.

896. *Why did our Lord call her by inference a dog?*

It being customary among the Jews to apply the term to their Gentile neighbours, he accommodated himself for the time to that view, in order the better to try the woman's patience.

897. He refused at first to listen to her petition," says St. Chrysostom, ' to instruct us with what faith, humility, and perseverance we ought to pray. To make his servants more sensible of his mercy, and more eager to obtain it, he often appears to pay no attention to their prayers till he has exercised them in the virtues of humility and patience."

898. *Why did our Saviour object to the observations on the weather made by the scribes and Pharisees?* (Matt. xiv. 2—4.)

Because they suffered these less important matters to engross so much of their attention, while they permitted the more interesting prognostics of *his* coming and appearance to pass over without observation, or at least without benefiting by them.

899. *Why was the name of Peter given to Simon?* (Matt. xvii. 18.)

In reward for his bold and faithful declaration that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

900. *What is the meaning of the word Peter?*

It is formed from the Syriac *cephas* and Greek *petros*, "a rock," and signified that its possessor was a rock or strong defence of the truth, or a foundation upon which the Church should be built.

901. *Why is it said of St. Peter, that when he should be old "he should stretch out his hands, and another should gird him"?*

Because in these words the martyrdom of the apostle was intended to be foreshown; the act of stretching out the hands being among the Jews and Romans of that day a mark of submission.

902. It was customary in the ancient combats for the vanquished person to throw up or stretch out his hands to the conqueror, signifying that he declined the battle, yielded the victory, and submitted to the direction of the victor. To this

custom our Lord alludes in his prediction to St. Peter. The aged apostle was to stretch out his hands as a token of submission to that power (the Roman empire), under which his mortal part would fall and perish.

903. *Why did St. Peter merit the severe rebuke from our Saviour conveyed in the words, "Get thee behind me, Satan"?* (Matt. xvi. 23.)

Because, out of mistaken zeal, he opposed Christ's passion and death, without which the great work of man's redemption could not have been effected.

904. The word *Satan* here used was the same as adversary. Peter, however mistakenly or unwillingly, was for the moment the adversary of Jesus Christ. He did not understand that there was nothing more glorious than to make one's self a sacrifice to God.

905. *Why did Jesus Christ dismiss without a sentence of punishment the woman taken in adultery?* (John viii. 3—11.)

Because he wished to show the Jews who accused her that her sin, although heinous, was not greater than those which they were in the daily habit of committing, and which he was ready to forgive whenever they should show signs of repentance equal to those exhibited by the woman in question.

906. Jesus Christ does not say, "I do not object to your sinning," but "go and sin no more." It is evident that the woman was really sorry for her crimes, or he who beholds all hearts would not have pronounced her pardon. The law with regard to the stoning to death of persons taken in adultery will be found in Deut. xvii. 2—7; the apostolic commentary upon the conduct of the woman's accusers in Romans ii. 1.

907. *Why did the Pharisees and Scribes put difficult questions to our Lord under the form, "Is it lawful?" when they themselves, as the possessors and expounders of the law, could stand in no need of any information upon the matters referred to?*

Because they wished to lead him into admissions contrary to the Mosaical code, and thus have an occasion to denounce him to the people as a subverter of the law.

908. *What advantage to themselves did the Jews, the enemies of Jesus, expect from the temptation of the tribute-money?* (Luke xx. 20, etc.)

They hoped by their cunningly-contrived questions to

inveigle our Lord into the expression of some words or advices which should offend either the Jewish converts, the Herodians (or partisans of Herod), or the Roman imperial power.

909. "Is it lawful," said they—showing him a piece of the tribute-money—"to give tribute to Cæsar, or no?" They hated, of course, the domination of Cæsar. Had our Lord advised the willing payment of the tribute, the Jews of every class would have been offended. Had he advised a doubtful course by referring the matter to Herod, who, as ruler of Galilee, was his temporal king, and who aspired to an independent rule, he would have been also in danger. Had he disapproved of the payment, the Jews would undoubtedly have denounced Jesus to the imperial tribunals as a disaffected person and a stirrer-up of revolution. He turned the question against themselves by showing them that the current coin bore the image and superscription of the Roman emperor, intimating that those who had allowed themselves to be enslaved, as proved by the coin, must expound the import and bear the consequences of their own act.

910. *Why was the payment of this tribute-money so odious to the Jews?*

Because, notwithstanding their degeneracy, they regarded themselves as the people of God, and as such exempted from any such imposition.

911. To oppose the levying of this tribute, Judas the Gaulonite (B.C. 3) raised an insurrection of the Jews, asserting that it was not lawful to pay tribute to a foreigner, that it was a token of servitude, and that the Jews were not allowed to acknowledge any for their master who did not worship the Lord. They boasted of being a free nation, and of never having been in bondage to any man (!). These sentiments were extensively promulgated, but all their efforts were of no avail in restraining or mitigating the exactions of their conquerors.

912. *Why did the apostles afterwards* (Acts v. 37) *recommend the payment of this and similar imposts?*

Because as they had received instructions from the Holy Spirit, they laid it down as a christian duty that every one should be loyally subject to the higher power, "for the powers that be are ordained of God."

913. Our Lord had in his own person set his apostles an example of this. Being called upon to pay the tribute, and being without money, by his direction the apostles draw a fish from the water, and extract from its mouth the necessary coin. (Matt. xvii. 27.)

914. *Why is it said, in answer to the objections of the*

The Sadducees Silenced.

Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, that in a future state the just shall be like the angels? (Matt. xxii. 30.)

Because in that state the duties as well as the pleasures will be of a character different in an infinite degree to those of the earth.

915. The objection taken by the Sadducees that a confusion would occur between the several husbands of one wife is shown by our Lord to be idle: the body will be reunited to the soul in heaven, and thus far the state of the blessed will differ from that of the angels, who are purely spiritual intelligences; but as there will be no marrying, or giving in marriage; as the occupations, the aims, the whole scope of celestial being, will differ from terrestrial, any squaring of the one set of ideas with the other, or any argument from the one to the other, is out of the question. The just will be like the angels chiefly in deriving all their gratification from the perfect knowledge and presence of God; from the gift of immortality, impassibility, etc.

916. *Why did our Lord foretell in such a striking manner the fall of Jerusalem?*

In order that the Jews, from the regard in which they held their city and temple, might be the more readily touched and their interest the more thoroughly excited.

917. The particulars handed down to us of the fall of Jerusalem correspond exactly with the predictions contained in Luke xxi. 9—11. Josephus, in his History of the Wars of the Jews, relates at length many of the prodigies which were the forerunners of the dreadful end of that unfortunate city. During a whole year a meteor, like a flaming sword, was seen impending over Jerusalem. There were likewise seen in the air appearances of chariots and numerous armies, which pressed one upon another. On the night of Pentecost the priests, after a confused noise, heard distinctly these words, "Let us go hence;" which Josephus attributed to the angels who had hitherto guarded and protected the holy city, but were now taking their leave of it. Josephus was in the Roman camp, before the city, during the siege, and an eye-witness of what passed on the occasion.

918. *Why does our Saviour say* (Luke xxi. 24) *that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled"?*

The answer to this question, given by Calmet, is as follows:—

919. "After Jerusalem had been taken and destroyed by the Romans, another city was built from its ruins, called Ælia, after the name of the Emperor Ælius Adrian. This was inhabited partly by Pagans and partly by Christians, for the Jews were forbidden even to come near it for more than two or three centuries. They even bought, at a great price, *permission to look at it* from a distance, and

to drop a tear over the ashes of their ancient and ill-fated country. Thus was Jerusalem trodden under foot of the Gentiles until the times of the latter were accomplished; that is, till Christianity in every nation had triumphed over the persecution of Paganism." It is an incontrovertible fact, that the Jews have never been able to rebuild their temple and city from the days of Titus till now, although many attempts have been made to do so.

920. *Why did the "buildings of the temple," which attracted our Lord's notice while discoursing with his apostles, prompt him to utter the prediction of its fall?* (Matt. xxiv. 1.)

Because the very works themselves, then going on by order of Herod, were a proximate cause of the troubles in Jerusalem which ended in its destruction. Thus:—

921. Herod (the Great), to ingratiate himself with the Jewish people, to whom he was on many accounts utterly odious, formed a design (B.C. 17) to rebuild and beautify the temple, which now, after it had stood five hundred years, and had suffered from the various sieges and civil commotions, was fallen much into decay. He was two years in providing materials, and it was so far advanced that in nine years and a half more, service was performed in it, though a great number of labourers and artificers were continued to finish the outworks till several years after our Lord's ascension. When Gessius Florus was appointed governor of Judea, he discharged 18,000 workmen from the temple at one time, and these, from want of employment, began those mutinies and seditions which at last drew on the destruction of the temple and city by the Romans in A.D. 70.

922. *What is meant by the "abomination of desolation" which Daniel* (ix. 27) *prophesied?*

It referred to the intrusion into the holy places of the ensigns and images of the heathens when Jerusalen was taken and finally destroyed.

923. As a general designation, it is used for whatever denotes the triumph of idolatrous power over the sanctuary of God. Its more particular reference in the New Testament is to the armies of Titus. The images of their gods and emperors were delineated on the ensigns of the Romans; and the ensigns themselves, especially the eagles, which were carried at the heads of the legions, were objects of worship; and, therefore, according to the style of Scripture, an abomination. The Jews regarded them as such, and in the midst of their apathy could be excited by their appearance to a pitch of heroic resistance.

924. *Why did our Saviour prophesy in reference to the destruction of the temple that not one stone should remain upon another?* (Matt. xxiv. 2.)

In order to show that not only in gross but in detail every future event was known to him, and to furnish us, who have

been witnesses of the perfect fulfilment of this particular prophecy, with another argument of his Divinity.

925. Although, under Vespasian, Jerusalem and the temple were levelled with the ground, the complete fulfilment of Christ's prophecy did not take place until some centuries had elapsed. Julian the Apostate, wishing to falsify the predictions of Daniel and of Jesus Christ, attempted to rebuild the temple. For this purpose he assembled the chief among the Jews, and asking them why they neglected the prescribed sacrifices, was answered, that they could offer sacrifice nowhere but in the temple of Jerusalem. Upon this he ordered them to repair to Jerusalem, to rebuild their temple, and restore their ancient worship, promising them his concurrence in carrying on the work. This filled the Jews with inexpressible joy. Hence, flocking to Jerusalem, they began with scorn and triumph to insult over the Christians. Contributions came in from all parts. The Jewish women stripped themselves of their most costly ornaments. The emperor opened his treasures to furnish everything necessary for the building. The most able workmen were convened from all parts; persons of the greatest distinction were appointed to direct the works; and the emperor's friend, Alipius, was set over the whole, with orders to carry on the work without ceasing, and to spare no expense. All materials were laid in to an immense quantity. The Jews of both sexes bore a share in the labour; the women helping to dig the ground and carry away the rubbish in their aprons and gowns. It is even said that the Jews appointed some pickaxes, spades, and baskets to be made of silver, for the honour of the work. Till this time the foundations and some ruins of the walls had remained, as appears from St. Cyril, in his "Catechism," 15, n. 15, and Euseb. "Dem. Evang." 1-8, p. 406. These ruins the Jews first demolished with their own hands, thus concurring to the accomplishment of our Saviour's prediction. They next began to dig the new foundations, in which many thousands were employed. But what they had thrown up in the day, was, by repeated earthquakes, the night following cast back again into the trench. When Alipius the next day was earnestly pressing on the work, with the assistance of the governor of the province, there issued, says Ammianus Marcellinus, such horrible balls of fire out of the earth near the foundations, as to render the place inaccessible from time to time to the scorched workmen. And the victorious element continuing in this manner, obstinately bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, Alipius thought proper to abandon, though reluctantly, the enterprise. This great event happened in the beginning of the year 363, and, with many very astonishing circumstances, is recorded by both Jews and Christians.

926. *Why will there be a general judgment at "the last day?"*

Because by that means the ways of Providence will be justified before all, and acknowledged by all.

927. A picture, by Michael Angelo, of the Last Judgment, in the Sistine chapel at Rome, is thus described:—

"The picture is grand, nay gigantic, like the mind that conceived it. It represents Christ in the act of judging, or rather, in the act of condemning. Martyrs are seen, who show to the Judge of the living and the dead the instruments of their

torture; souls ascend to the choirs of angels hovering above; the condemned strive in vain to break loose from the grasp of the demons; there the evil spirits burst into shouts of triumph at the sight of their prey; the last who are dragged down endeavour to cling to the good, who remain in Christ's kingdom; the gulf of eternal damnation is seen opening; Jesus Christ is seen surrounded by his apostles, who place a crown on his head, and by a multitude of saints, while angels above carry in triumph the emblems of his passion; and, lower down, another company of angels sound the trumpets which awaken the dead from their tombs and call them to judgment."

928. *What is the purpose of the parable of the good Samaritan?* (Luke x. 30.)

The intent is to show that every person who has need of our assistance is to receive it; is to be regarded as our neighbour, and entitled to all those acts of charity and courtesy which a neighbour may claim.

929. This duty is placed by our Lord in the strongest light by his selecting as its object the person of a Samaritan—one who stands as the type of a bad neighbour, or an alien. It has been shown how bitter were the feelings engendered and nourished between the Jews and Samaritans. Christians are hereby taught that they must not restrict their charity to Christians, but extend them equally to Jews, infidels, and pagans.

930. *What was the purpose of the striking parable of the rich man and Lazarus?* (Luke xvi. 19.)

It was intended to enforce the previous exhortations to mercy, and a consideration for the poor; also to rebuke the love of riches.

931. *Why is the "rich man" in this parable not mentioned by name, while the beggar is so distinguished?*

Probably because our Lord did not wish the application to be confined in any way, which might have been the case had a Jewish or a Gentile name been given to the glutton.

932. *Why is Lazarus the beggar described as in Abraham's bosom?* (Luke xvi. 22.)

Because by that expression is signified a state of perfect felicity in heaven.

933. According to Hebrew diction a beloved son, though at a distance, is still said to be in the "bosom" of his parents. "The king is indeed very fond of that man, he keeps him in his bosom." "Yes the servant is a great favourite with his master, he has a place in his bosom." "Do you never intend your son to go out of

your bosom?" These are ordinary expressions in the East. The ideas implied by the term "bosom," are, intense affection, security, and comfort. Thus, also, that passage in St. John i. 18, "The only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

934. *Why is it said "between us and you* (i. e., *between Lazarus in heaven and the glutton in hell) there is a great gulf fixed?"* (Luke xvi. 26.)

To show that when the sinner or the saint has passed the portals of either dwelling, there is no possibility of return.

935. The rich man begs Abraham, if he cannot afford him any relief in his torments, to send at least a warning message to his brethren on earth. Abraham's reply was intended for the Jews. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded *though one rose from the dead.*"

"They would say," adds Calmet, "that the dead man was a phantom; that his resurrection was not real; his assertions nugatory. When Christ raised Lazarus of Bethany from the dead, the miracle was known, evident, and public; yet we find none of the Pharisees converted by it. They were even so mad as to enter into a design to kill Lazarus, to get rid of the witness who deposed against their incredulity. How many other miracles did he not perform in their sight which they attributed to the prince of darkness or to magic! Christ raised himself from the dead. This fact was attested by many unexceptionable witnesses, and what did the hardened Jews do? They objected, that his disciples, stealing away the body, maliciously persuaded the people that he had risen."

936. *Why did our Saviour eat with publicans and sinners to the scandal of the Jews?*

1. In order to win the former from their unlawful practices through the purity and justice of his conversation and example. 2. In order to show to the latter that a mere outward observance of the law established no claim to the favour of God.

937. The Pharisees considered the publicans as irrecoverably lost characters, they themselves being beyond risk. It was to rebuke this self-sufficiency that Jesus Christ so often consorted with "sinners;" that he gave the parables of the lost sheep —of the lost piece of silver—of the prodigal son—and of the Pharisee and publican.

938. *What lesson is conveyed by the parable of the Pharisee and publican?*

It exhibits the model of a true worshipper in contradistinction to one who uses the outward ordinances of religion from an improper motive.

939. *Why is the Pharisee in the parable blamed for praising*

himself, when Job is commended for doing the same thing? (Job xlii. 7.)

The difference is evident: the former praised himself without any necessity, merely with an intention of indulging his vanity, and extolling himself over the poor publican; the latter being overwhelmed with misery, and upbraided by his friends, as if, forsaken by God he suffered distress in punishment for his crimes, justifies himself for the glory of God, and for the encouragement of others similarly afflicted.

940. *Why is the episode of Zaccheus related?* (Luke xix.)

An answer to this question is given by St. Ambrose:—

941. "What sinner can despair when he sees the Saviour of mankind seeking to save him; when he beholds even a publican, and a rich man at the same time, who, as our Saviour informs us in another place, is so seldom truly converted, brought to the light of faith and the grace of a true conversion?"

Zaccheus, who was a farmer of taxes, and not a portitor or collector, at first moved by the simple motive of curiosity, wishes to see Jesus. He hears that the reputed Messiah is to pass by his neighbourhood. Being a very short man he ascends a tree to get a better view and not to be incommoded by the crowd. The first glance of Jesus is sufficient to convert him. He hastens to obey the call of his Lord, hearkening to the interior voice of his conscience, and making haste not only to repent, but to restore anything he may have unfairly acquired.—(St. Cyril.)

942. *Why is it argued that our Lord, in the parable of the man who owed ten thousand talents, approves the practice of slavery?** (Matt. xviii. 25).

Because it was no part of his mission on earth to alter the institutions or the economy of nations except so far as the spirit of his gospel should influence men of their own accord to do so.

943. On the contrary, he commanded his disciples by word and example to submit to all the laws and regulations of society for his sake; the only exception to this rule being where there was a complete incompatibility between the service of the state under which his followers found themselves and the observance of the divine law.

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* "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

"And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought to him which owed ten thousand talents:

"But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded *him to be sold, and his wife and his children*, and all that he had, and payment to be made."

944. *What was the value represented by a talent?*

Figuratively, it signified any great gift, moral, intellectual, or material. Its actual money value among the ancients is a matter of doubt. A talent of gold is said to be 4900 lb.; of silver, 375 lb.

945. The ten thousand talents mentioned, Matt. xviii. 24, according to some authors amount to about $9,335,000. The hundred pence amounted to no more than $15.

946. *What was the principal meaning of the parable of the ten talents?* (Matt. xxv. 1.)

It was intended to enforce the truth that God will demand from every man an account of the use he has made of those talents, abilities, or means of usefulness with which he has endowed him.

947. *What is the lesson intended to be conveyed in the parable of the importunate widow?** (Luke xviii.)

That Christians should be earnest and persevering in their prayers to God, and not be easily discouraged.

948. This judge, who feared not God nor regarded man, yet yielded to the importunity of the widow, represents the absolute and sovereign power of God. But we must not suppose the Almighty has any of the faults we see in this iniquitous judge. *Comparisons are not made to hold good in every particular.* The only consequence to be drawn from the present parable is this: if a man, who has neither piety nor tenderness for his fellow-creatures, yield to the importunity of a widow, who is not wearied out with repeating her petitions, how much more will God, who is full of bounty and compassion to man, and only seeks occasions to grant him his gifts, hear the prayers of the fervent, and fill with benediction the petitioner, who can continue, like the widow, to importune his interference, and can beg without languor or discouragement.—(Calmet.)

* "There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

"And there was a widow in that city: and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

"And he would not for a while: but afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

"Yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."

Parables of our Saviour.

949. *What is the meaning of the parable commencing, "There was a certain householder?"* * (Matt. xxi. 33.)

This *Master* is God; the *vineyard* the Jews; the *husbandmen* the Jewish priests; the *servants* God's prophets, sent from time to time; the *Son* is our Saviour Christ, whom they persecuted to death.

950. *Why, in the parable of the vineyard, is the owner said to have built a tower?*

Because it was customary in the East, whenever a vineyard was planted, to erect such a building as a sort of look-out, whence danger from robbers or military incursionists could be descried.

951. Mr. Buckingham says, "I was particularly struck with the appearance of several small and detached square towers in the midst of vineyards, said by our guide to be used as watch towers, from which watchmen looked out to guard the produce of the lands themselves, even in the present day."

952. *What is the meaning of the first portion of the parable beginning, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son"?*† (Matt. xxii. 1—14.)

The *King* is God; his *Son* is Jesus Christ; the *marriage* is

* "There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

"And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

"And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

"Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did unto them likewise.

"But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

"But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

"And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him."

† "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

"And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come.

"Again, he sent other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold I

the Christian system; the *feast* the grace of God and its fruits here and hereafter; his *servants* were the prophets, and lastly John the Baptist; the *one who went to his farm*, that portion who preferred temporal pursuits to religious duties; the *armies sent* were the Romans under Vespasian and Titus; the *burning of the city*, the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

953. *What is the signification of the second portion of the same parable?**

The *highways* represent the world, which was now addressed, and not the Jews only; *both bad and good*, that all kinds of persons, sincere and insincere, would be comprehended in the Church under a profession of Christianity; the *wedding garment* was the proper disposition of a Christian (sincere faith joined to a good life); the *king's inspection of the guests*, the judgment; *the casting out*, the final punishment of the wicked.

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have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

"But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize:

"And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

"But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city."

* "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

"So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment.

"And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? and he was speechless.

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"For many are called, but few are chosen."

Parables of our Saviour.

954. *Why, in the parable of the marriage feast, was the guest who had not a "wedding garment" cast out into outer darkness?*

Because, according to the Eastern ceremonial, each guest being amply provided with a supply of appropriate clothing at the expense of the giver of the feast, such an omission was construed into an open act of contempt. The spiritual meaning of this portion of the parable has been pointed out. With regard to the Oriental practice, the following extract will be useful:—

955. "The next day, December 3, the king sent to invite the ambassadors to dine with him once more. The Mehemandar told them that it was the custom that they should wear over their own clothes the best of those garments which the king had sent them. The ambassadors at first made some scruple of that compliance; but when they were told that it was a custom observed by all ambassadors, and that no doubt the king would take it very ill at their hands if they presented themselves before him without the marks of his liberality, they at last resolved to do it, and after their example all the rest of the retinue."—(Abassador's Travels.)

956. *What is the meaning of the parable commencing, "A certain man had two sons"?** (Matt. xxi. 28.)

By the first son is to be understood the Gentiles, as also publicans and scandalous sinners; and by the second the Jewish people.

957. This is the opinion of St. Chrysostom. Our Saviour wished to make the Jews sensible of their own ingratitude, and of the ready obedience of the cast-off Gentiles. For they having never heard the law nor promised obedience, have still shown their submission by their actions; whereas the Jews, after promising to obey the voice of God, had neglected the performance.—(Hom. 68.)

958. *What was the lesson intended to be conveyed by the parable of the unjust steward?* (Luke xvi.)

It was meant to exalt the virtue of prudence, and was in no way a justification of the means used by that officer to provide a remedy for his loss of fortune.

* "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go to work to-day in my vineyard.

"He answered and said, I will not; but afterwards he repented, and went.

"And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; but went not.

"Whether of these twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

Parables of our Saviour.

959. "The lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely," *i. e.*, being already unjust, he had husbanded his means well; so that the latter part at least of his injustice would prove profitable to him by making him friends, who when out of his appointment would, in all probability, receive him into their houses. People are hereby exhorted to use their justice so that God, who is the rewarder of all righteousness, may after this life receive them into "everlasting habitations."—(De Lyra.)

960. *Why is money or riches called the "Mammon of unrighteousness"?*

Mammon is a Syriac word, signifying riches or wealth; the term "unrighteousness" is affixed to show that money, or at least the inordinate love of it, is the fruitful source of all evil.

961. *What is the import of the parable of the ten virgins?** (Matt. xxv. 1—13.)

According to the best commentators it prefigures the end of the world. The *marriage* is the reward of the just in heaven; the *ten virgins*, the world in general, partly wise and partly unwise; the *cry made*, the last trumpet of the angel summoning to judgment.

962. "After the final day of judgment," says St. Jerome, "there will be no room for prayers. Having received those within its walls who have put on in some degree the nature of the angels, the gate to the city of bliss will be closed for ever."—(St. Augustine.)

* "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

"And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

"They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them.

"But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

"Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

"And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.

"But the wise answered, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

"But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

"Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

"When the festivities in the house of the bride's father had ended, the bridegroom, attended by his friends, conducted the bride with her friends to his own abode. This ceremony took place at night, hence the need of the lamps mentioned in Matt. xxv. 1; for the bride with her companions went forth to meet the bridegroom, and his party came to fetch the bride home, where was held what was properly the nuptial feast."

PERSIAN MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

A passage in Homer, forming part of the description of the shield of Achilles, illustrates this point:—

"Two cities radiant on the shield appear,
The image one of peace and one of war;
Here sacred pomp and genial feast delight,
And solemn dance and hymenial rite:
Along the street the new-made brides are led
With torches flaming——"

Respecting the words "watch therefore," St. Augustine says—"How can we be always watching, it being necessary for each one to give himself sufficient time to sleep and rest from his many labours? We may always keep watching in our hearts by faith, hope, charity, and all other good works. But when we awake, like the five wise virgins, we must arise and trim our lamps by supplying them with the oil of piety. Then they will not go out, nor will the soothing oil of a good conscience be wanting to us. Then will the Bridegroom come and introduce us to his house, where we shall never need sleep or rest; nor will our lamps ever be in danger of going out. Whilst we are in this life we labour; and our lamps, blown about by the winds of innumerable temptations, are always in danger of being extinguished; but soon their flame will become more brilliant, and the temptations we have suffered here shall not diminish but increase its lustre."—(Serm. 24.)

St. Mary Magdalene.

963. *Who were the Galileans mentioned in* Luke xiii., *"whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices"?*

They are supposed to have been some of the seditious followers of Judas the Galilean (or Gaulonite), who denied that the Hebrew people could lawfully pay taxes to a Gentile government; and it is thought that some of them coming to offer up sacrifices in the Temple, were slain by Pilate in the midst of the sacred function.

964. *Why did our Lord seem to excuse these unfortunate fanatics?* (Luke v. 3.)

Because he wished to rebuke those who rashly and uncharitably pronounce every misfortune that happens to their neighbour to be a *judgment* upon him.

965. *Why did our Saviour say, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise* (i. e., *in a similar manner*) *perish"?*

Because he had in his mind at that moment the fate which afterwards actually befell the Jews.

966. Under the government of Cumanus (A.C. 47—53) 20,000 of them were destroyed about the temple.—(Josephus, Antiq. lib. xx. c. 4.)

967. *What is the meaning of the phrase, "Let your loins be girded about"?* (Luke xii. 35.)

They who travel on foot among the Orientals are obliged to fasten their garments at a greater height from their feet than they do at other times.

968. Chardin observes, that "all persons who follow the pedestrian mode of travelling always gather up their vest, by which they walk more commodiously, having the leg and knee unburdened and disembarrassed by the vest, which they are not when that hangs over them." After this manner he supposes the Israelites were prepared for their going out of Egypt when they ate the first passover.

969. *Why is Mary Magdalene so called?*

From the town or castle of Magdala, which was situated on the lake of Gennesareth, and where she is supposed to have been born.

970. Commentators differ upon the question whether the sister of Lazarus and Mary Magdalene, the public sinner, were one and the same person: indeed, upon this point the greatest names and authorities are at variance. The point is immaterial. Mary Magdalene, whether as the sister of Lazarus, and the model of those who prefer to sit at Jesus' feet and hear his words, or as a type of the

repentant sinner, has always been a favourite subject of contemplation and hope. In our Lord's last hours and at his death, Mary Magdalene was a chief and important witness. She stood near the cross with Mary the mother of Jesus. After his death, in the same favoured company, she "beheld the place where the body was laid; and they returned, and prepared spices and ointments." In reward for her loving fidelity, she was the first, according to the gospel narrative, to whom our Lord vouchsafed the sight of his risen glory, and by whom the message of the resurrection was conveyed to "the apostles and Peter." According to his promise, the faith of Mary Magdalene is in everlasting remembrance, her memory has been embalmed, and consecrated by the veneration of all ages. By some Greek authors she is said to have accompanied St. John and the mother of Jesus to Ephesus, and to have died there about the year 53.

971. *Why did Mary Magdalene pour ointment upon the head of our Saviour, while he was at the table of Simon the leper?* (Mark xiv. 3.)

Because, according to the symbolism of the East, she thus expressed, in the most pointed manner, her esteem and veneration of the person of Jesus Christ.

972. While the entertainment was going on, the master of the family, to show his respect for the company, and to prevent the hurtful consequences of indulgence, caused the servants in attendance to anoint their heads with precious unguents, and perfume the room by burning myrrh, frankincense, and other odours. Mary did no more on this occasion than politeness demanded from Simon, but which had been omitted by him. The balsam was contained in a box of alabaster, whose mouth was stopped with cotton, upon which melted wax was poured so as to effectually exclude the air. The opening of this stopper or seal was, in the figurative language of the country, called breaking the bottle.

ABASTER WARE.

973. *In what way could Mary Magdalene approach the feet of Jesus while at table in the Pharisee's house, so as to wash them with her tears, and dry them with the hair of her head?*

A consideration of the form of the tables, and the manner of eating at them then prevalent, will make this clear:—

The Transfiguration of Christ.

974. The tables of the ancient Jews, like the Romans, were constructed of three distinct parts, or separate tables, making but one in the whole. One was placed at the upper end crossway, and the two others joined to its ends, one on each side, so as to leave an open space between them, by which the attendants could readily wait at all the three. Round these tables were placed not *seats*, but *beds*, one to each table. Each of these beds was called *clinium*, and three of these being united to surround the three tables made the *triclinium*. At the end of each clinium was a footstool, for the convenience of mounting up to it. These beds were formed of mattresses, and were supported on frames of wood, often highly ornamented. Each guest reclined on his left elbow, using principally his right hand, which was therefore kept at liberty. The feet of the person reclining being towards the external edge of the bed, were much more readily reached by anybody passing than any other part.

975. *Why did our Saviour commend the behaviour of Mary Magdalene, and blame that of the Pharisee?*

Because she had as far exceeded in fervour the courtesies usually shown to a guest as he had fallen short of them.

976. The first ceremony after the guests arrived at the house of entertainment was the salutation performed by the master of the house, or one appointed in his place. Among the Greeks this was sometimes done by embracing; but the most common salutation was by the conjunction of the right hand (as with us at the present day); grasping the right hand being reckoned a pledge of fidelity and friendship. Sometimes they kissed the lips, hands, knees, or feet, as the person deserved more or less respect. The Jews welcomed a stranger to their house in the same way, for our Lord complains to Simon that he had given him no kiss, had welcomed him to his table with none of the accustomed tokens of respect.—(Paxton.)

977. *Why was our Saviour transfigured upon mount Tabor?*

1. Because a visible manifestation was thus given to the three leading apostles, of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. 2. Because thus the Mosaical and the Prophetical systems were shown to have terminated, and to be merged in that of the New Testament. 3. Because the transfiguration, from its glorious and consoling character, was necessary to fortify the drooping hearts of Christ's followers.

978. The transfiguration holds a middle place between the temptation and the resurrection of our Lord, being one of the three great events which in a marked manner illustrate the development of the gospel on earth, and the disclosure of the majesty of its divine promulgator.

This event is to be considered—1. As a solemn confirmation of the prophetic office of Christ. 2. As designed to support the faith of the disciples, which was to be deeply tried by his approaching humiliations, and to afford consolation to the

human nature of our Lord himself, by giving him a foretaste of "the joy set before him." 3. As an emblem of humanity glorified at the resurrection. 4. As declaring Christ to be superior to Moses and Elias, the giver and the restorer of the law. 5. As an evidence to the disciples of the existence of a separate state, in which good men consciously enjoy the felicity of heaven. 6. As a proof that the bodies of good men shall be so refined and changed, as, like Elias, to live in a state of immortality, and in the presence of God. 7. As exhibiting the sympathy which exists between the church in heaven and the church on earth, and the instruction which the former receives from the events which take place in the latter. Moses and Elias conversed with our Lord on his approaching death, doubtless to receive, not to convey information. 8. As maintaining the grand distinction, the infinite difference, between Christ and the prophets. He is "*the Son.*" "*This is my beloved Son, hear him.*" It has been observed with much truth, that the condition in which Jesus Christ appeared among men, humble, meek, poor, and despised, was a true and continual transfiguration; whereas the transfiguration itself, in which he showed himself in the real splendour of his glory, was his true and natural condition.—(Watson.)

979. *Why did the multitude carry palm branches before our Saviour when he rode into Jerusalem?*

Because the palm was the emblem of victory.

980. The fickle people who were so soon afterwards to cry out against Jesus, "Not this man, but Barabbas! Crucify him! Crucify him!" regarded him on the present occasion as a real conqueror. He had worked miracles—he had shown himself possessed of a power no less than divine. They would now take him by force and make him a king. At least such a king as befitted their earthly and grovelling instincts.

The ancient writers, among whom are Plutarch, assign as the reason why palm branches became emblems of triumph, the fact, that it is a natural property of the palm to rise up against pressure. The blessed in heaven (Rev. vii. 9) are represented as standing before the throne with white robes and palms in their hands.

The triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem from Bethany was on the first day of the week, answering to our Sunday, the very day on which, by the appointment of the law (Exod. xii. 3), the lamb was brought thither to be sacrificed at the passover. This was to show by another instance how in him all the figures of the law were fulfilled.

981. *Why did Jesus Christ ride into Jerusalem upon a colt?*

As a token of humility, and to fulfil the words of prophecy. (Zech. ix. 9.)

982. The colt, which as yet had not been used, signified the Gentiles, to whom God had hitherto given no written law as he had done to the Jews; but who were now to bear the sweet burden of Christ. The prophecy of Zechariah was thus fulfilled to the very letter. By the order which Jesus Christ gave to his apostles to procure the colt he showed, 1, his omniscience; 2, his supreme dominion. He knew what was going on in the village of Bethany, although at some distance from it. He

tells his disciples that the colt will be given to them upon their pronouncing his name, and saying, "The Lord hath need of him."

983. *What is the meaning of the word Alleluiah, or Hallelujah?*

It signifies "praise to God," or "praise ye the Lord;" and is derived, through the Greek, from the Hebrew.

984. The word occurs in its original elements in several psalms—as Ps. cxlviii., cxlix., and cl., each of which it commences and terminates. From its frequent occurrence in this way, it grew into a formula of praise and thanksgiving, and was chanted as such on solemn days of rejoicing.

985. *What is the meaning of "Hosanna?"*

It is a form of acclamatory blessing, or wishing well, which signifies, "Save now," "Succour now," "Be now propitious."

986. When the Jews saluted our Lord's entrance into their city with hosannas, they meant to say, "Lord preserve this son of David, heap favours and blessings on him!" They were accustomed to use the word in the Feast of Tabernacles, and this association led them upon the present occasion to strew branches upon the ground before our Lord.

987. *Why was the name "Son of David" hateful to the Romans?*

Because it was notorious to that people that the Jews looked for the advent of a great personage who, under some such title, should deliver them from the yoke of the heathen; so that there was rebellion in the very name that he proclaimed.

988. It is easy to imagine also with what expressions of derision the announcement would have been subsequently received by the wits and philosophers of Rome, that twelve poor fishermen of Judea had resolved to change the laws and customs, the philosophy, and the religion of the Roman empire. What a miserable plot it would have been thought, and one that it was impossible could ever succeed. We, however, who live in these later times, have the happiness to know that while the religion of the "Son of David" has spread over, and lives in every part of the globe, the heathen empire of Rome has utterly vanished.

989. *Why was the high priest Caiaphas able to utter the true prophecy, "It is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not"?* (John xi. 50.)

Because he had the prophetical gift in virtue of his "order," or office as high priest, to which it was annexed.

The Barren Fig Tree.

990. The gift of prophecy does not make a man acceptable to God apart from his personal character. It is supposed that Caiaphas exercised the sacrificial office alternately with his father-in-law Annas. (Luke iii. 2.)

991. *Why is it said of the Jews that "God had blinded their eyes that they should not see"?* (John xii. 40.)

The meaning is, that as a punishment for their innumerable treasons against him, God had withdrawn his grace from them and left them to the natural blindness of their own hearts.

992. "They could not believe because they would not. For as it is the glory of the will of God that it cannot be averse to its own glory, so it is the fault of the will of man that it cannot believe."—(St. Augustine.)

993. *Why did Jesus Christ pronounce a curse upon the barren fig-tree?* (Matt. xxi. 19.)

St. Chrysostom thus expounds the passage in which it occurs:—

994. "By the fig-tree was represented the Jewish synagogue; the hunger of Christ was a figure of his extreme desire of finding it productive of good works answerable to the pains he had taken for more than three years. The leaves were their pompous show of exterior service, the barren foliage of legal rites void of the internal spirit and good works, the only valuable produce of the tree. By the withering of the tree subsequent to Christ's imprecation, the reprobation and utter barrenness of the synagogue are represented. Our Saviour had no enmity to the tree. It was an occasion to him to show that although he had often exercised his miraculous powers for the benefit of the Jewish people, he could also threaten and punish."—(St. Chrys. Hom. 68.)

995. *Why did our Saviour say, "In my Father's house are many mansions"?* (John xiv. 2.)

To inform us that in heaven (his Father's house) there were prepared different degrees of happiness and glory, for the different orders of saints.

996. *Why did our Saviour say, in reply to the request of Philip to be shown the Father, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"?* (John xiv. 9.)

Because he thus declared his equality with the Father as God.

997. As if he had said, "When you see me, you see not a man only, but God, equal to the Father in all things."—(St. Chrysostom and St. Cyril.)

Last Admonitions of Christ.

998. *Why did Jesus Christ promise his apostles that the miracles they should after his ascension perform should be greater than those he had on earth performed?* (John xiv. 12.)

Because, his visible presence being withdrawn from them, they would require a larger degree of the miracle-working power in order to convince the unbelieving world of the divinity of their message.

999. *Why did our Saviour, being equal to the Father in all perfections, say, "the Father is greater than I"?* (John xiv. 28.)

Because, although as God he was equal, as man, being clothed with the infirmity of mortal flesh and bearing the penalty of man's transgression, he was less than the Father.

1000. *Why did Jesus Christ speak of his keeping the commandments of his Father, if he was equal to him as God?* (John xv. 10.)

Because he was here speaking of himself as man, and setting us an example that we must not only believe in God but keep his commandments.

1001. This the tenth verse expresses thus:—"If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." Here we naturally infer two things:—1. That Jesus Christ as God has the power of *imposing commandments*. 2. As Christians we prove our love to Christ *by keeping them*.

1002. *Why did our Saviour say, "A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me"?* (John xvi. 16).

The meaning is: After a little while—only a few hours—since these words were spoken during the last week of his earthly life—Jesus would be taken from them by death, and after three days they should again see him—at his resurrection. He would after that remain with them some few weeks, and then would ascend to the Father.

1003. Some writers interpret the passage thus:—"After a few short days you shall see me depart to the Father; again after a little while, after the troubles of this life, here called "a little while," you shall be reunited to me in the kingdom of my Father, whither I go in order to prepare you a place."

Preparations for the Last Supper.

1004. *Why did our Saviour, previous to his passion,* admonish the people to follow the good doctrine, and to abide by the authority of the Pharisees while they eschewed their bad example?* (Matt. xxiii.)

He did so lest anything he had said against the evil lives of the Jewish leaders should be understood to throw discredit upon the "chair of Moses," or the official character which, as teachers and expounders of the law, the scribes and Pharisees inherited.

1005. The obvious inference is, that ministers in authority are not to be despised *when they teach*, because, through the frailty of human nature, they may sometimes or even habitually contradict their teaching by an unworthy life.

1006. *Why were the disciples directed to procure (for the paschal supper) a large upper room furnished?*

This question is best answered by showing the arrangement of an Eastern house which was in most instances as follows:—

1007. The lower floor was occupied as a store. Here were deposited the provisions, corn, fruit, oil, etc., necessary for the household. The drippings from the jars, and the odour from the fruits, rendered this portion uninhabitable except by the mules and other cattle which belonged to the family. The floor above this was that used for the ordinary purposes of living. Here cooking, eating, and general domestic life took place. Above this the upper room was situated; and in this portion all the splendour of which the possessor was capable was exhibited. The room is both higher and larger than those below. It generally had wide projecting windows, and the floor was so much extended in front beyond the lower part of the building, that the projecting windows considerably overhung the street. In such

* By the word "passion" is understood the great accumulation of vicarious suffering borne by our Lord, in what is known as the Holy Week, or the week commencing with the Sunday on which he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and ending with Good Friday, when he expired upon the cross. In the "Litany" used in the Established Church of England, the petition, "By thy cross and *passion*" occurs; and in a note to Dr. Mant's edition of the Common Prayer, upon that petition, is the following:—"The ancient Fathers of the Greek Church, in their Litany, after they had recounted all the particular pains in Christ's passion, as they are set down in the four gospels, and by all and every one called for mercy and deliverance, as here we do, added after all, and shut up all with this petition, 'By thine unknown sorrows and sufferings, good Lord have mercy upon us, save and deliver us;' for he felt more of them than we know, or can distinctly express."

an upper room, secluded, spacious, and commodious, the Lord's Supper was instituted; and in a similar one St. Paul preached that parting discourse, at which Eutychus, overcome by heat and drowsiness, fell asleep, and falling down from above, was taken up dead. (Acts xx. 9.)

1008. *Why did our Saviour, in sending his disciples to prepare the supper-room, say, "My time is at hand"?*

Because such was the common expression used to denote the near approach of a person's death.

1009. Jesus Christ, in all his discourses with his disciples or to the people, adopts the common phraseology of the Hebrews. With them it was customary to consider that man's life had a certain allotted span, which admitted neither of extension or abridgment. Consequently his life was "*a time*," and the hour of death its inevitable termination.

At the command of Jesus, the apostles go and engage a room for the celebration of the paschal rites. If anything was wanting to confirm them in their belief in the divine character of their Lord, his conduct on this occasion might well have supplied it. They are told to proceed towards Jerusalem. When they had reached it, as they entered its gates, they should meet a man bearing a pitcher of water. They were to follow this person until they saw him enter a certain house. They were then to accost him in these words:—"The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest's chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?"

In all probability this man was a perfect stranger to the apostles, and except by fame knew nothing of Jesus Christ. He has a house, and therein a certain room—honoured in this instance above all human habitations—in which THE MASTER desires to eat the passover. At once, without hesitation, he submits to the request, or rather the demand, made upon him by the apostles, and yields possession. "And they made ready the passover."

1010. *Why is the Last, or Lord's Supper so called?*

Because it was instituted by Christ, as the last act of his ministry, in company with the apostles, after he had supped with them, and immediately before he went out to be delivered into the hands of his enemies.

1011. Jesus having fulfilled the law of Moses, to which in all things he submitted, by eating the paschal supper with the twelve, proceeded to institute a rite, which, to any person that reads the words of the institution, without having formed a previous opinion upon the subject, will appear to have been intended by him as a memorial of that event which was to happen not many hours after (Luke xxii. 19), and was meant to be observed by all Christians to the end of the world. As often as ye eat of this bread and drink of this cup, ye shall show the Lord's death till he come," 1 Cor. xi. 23—26. In these words St. Paul adds his testimony to the obligation and perpetuity of the observance.

Origin of the word Sacrament.

1012. *Why did our Saviour, previous to the institution of the Lord's Supper, wash his disciples' feet?* (Luke xiii. 5.)

1. As an act of humility. It was an exemplification of his own precept, "He that is greatest among you let him be the minister." 2. To show that cleanness of heart was necessary as a preparation for the reception of the sacrament.

1013. *Why did St. Peter object to our Lord's performing such an act of humility towards him?*

Because, failing to perceive its hidden meaning, he thought the act derogatory to the dignity of Jesus Christ.

1014. Although the most ardent and generous-minded of the apostles, St. Peter was undoubtedly the humblest.

1015. *Why did Jesus, before instituting the Lord's supper, take the cup, and give thanks, saying, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves"?* (Luke xxii. 17.)

Because it was the custom with the master of the feast to take such a cup, to bless it with ceremony, then drink of it, and pass it to the guests.

1016. The modern Jews still observe this custom, not only at the passover, but on all other great feasts. The father of the family pours wine into a cup, takes it in his right hand, elevates it, blesses it, tastes, and gives it round to the invited. Our Saviour, on the occasion in question, complied with the ordinary custom.

1017. *Why did our Saviour add to the above words, "For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come"?*

He intimated that from that moment *until his resurrection* he would not do so; that he did so afterwards is probable from Acts x. 41.

1018. *Why was the Lord's Supper called by the name of a sacrament?*

From the very nature of the rite, which, in its primitive form, was a solemn pledge of fidelity made to the person instituting it.

1019. The word sacrament is derived from *sacramento*, a Latin word, the name of an oath of unlimited *obedience to the general* and *fidelity to the standard*, administered by the tribunes to the legionaries of the Roman army.

The Church of England definition of a sacrament is found in the Catechism,

Meaning of the Sacrament.

thus stated:—"An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof."

The Roman Catholic definition is as follows:—"A sacrament is an outward sign of inward grace, or a sacred and mysterious sign or ceremony ordained by Christ, by which grace is conveyed to our souls."—(Catechism, *Permissu superiorum.*)

Among those professing Christianity who belong to neither of the above communions, a different sense is put upon the word sacrament. With such, a sacrament is an external rite designed to represent what is spiritual and invisible, to be used as a means, like the reading of the Scriptures, or the frequenting of a place of worship, for purposes of moral improvement. It is universally agreed that a sacrament is something external, containing, either subjectively or objectively, some other thing of an internal or moral nature, and that it should have been instituted by Christ or by the apostles. Of the sacraments Protestants admit two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Roman Catholics and Greeks seven, viz., 1. Baptism; 2. Penance (or Confession); 3. Eucharist (Lord's Supper); 4. Confirmation; 5. Extreme Unction (Anointing the Sick); 6. Holy Orders; 7. Matrimony.

1020. *Why have disputes arisen among Christians with reference to the words of institution used by Christ at the "last supper"?*

Because of the different interpretation put upon them by different sections of the church—one section preferring the literal and grammatical sense, and another the figurative sense.

1021. These divisions are thus stated:—The literal sense of the words, "This is my body," "This is my blood" (Mark xiv. 22—24), is adopted by the Roman Catholic, the Greek, and a portion of the English Established communions. The symbolical, or figurative sense, is held by the German Reformed Churches, the Genevese Confession, the Low Church or Evangelical party (forming the great majority of the Church of England), and the whole body of Protestants.

1022. *What is the difference between the literal and the figurative sense of these words?*

By the literal sense, those who hold it understand that in the Lord's supper the body and blood of Christ are in some mysterious way actually received; by the figurative sense it is understood that the presence of Christ in the sacrament is not actual or real, but symbolical only.

1023. *Why did our Saviour, while seated at table with his apostles during the Last Supper, speak of one of them being about to betray him?*

1. Because this would be another proof to them of his

A.C. 33.—Conclusion of the Last Supper.

divine foreknowledge; and, 2, because thus an opportunity was given to Judas to repent of, and abandon, his contemplated treason.

1024. *Why did Judas ask, with the rest of the apostles, "Is it I"?*

Because for a moment, being ashamed of his treachery, he sought to conceal it by a hypocritical show of innocence.

1025. Jesus had previously pointed him out in those words, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." And here it may be well to remark the striking fulfilment of prophecy. It had been said in Psalm xli. 9, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."

1026. *What is the meaning of "he that dippeth his hand with me in the dish," as applied by our Lord to Judas?*

It was the custom at that time to eat with the hands only, and without the assistance of forks, which were not introduced till many centuries after.

1027. *Why is it said by the evangelist* (St. Luke xxii. 3), *that Satan now entered the heart of Judas Iscariot?*

Because, having rejected the opportunity of repentance offered him by his Master, he gave himself up to the power of the fiend.

1028. *Why did our Lord and his apostles sing a hymn previous to the conclusion of the Last Supper?*

Because such a practice formed part of the paschal solemnities among the Jews, which Christ and his followers were strict in maintaining up to the moment of their abolition.

1029. The hymn which was sung is generally supposed to have been the latter part of the "*Hallel*," or series of psalms prescribed by the ritual of the period, viz., Psalms cxiii. to cxviii., the first two being sung before, and the other four after the passover.

From this precedent and the precept of the apostle (Eph. v. 19, etc.), "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," the systems of hymnology at present in use with the Christian churches took their rise.

1030. *What was the situation of Gethsemane?*

It was adjacent to Jerusalem, on the east side, over the brook Kidron, and at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

A.C. 33.—The Agony in the Garden.

1031. The term Gethsemane means "garden of olives." The place was a small plot, or enclosure, occupying part of a level space between the brook Kidron and the foot of the mount. The place, as now pointed out, corresponds in every particular with all the conditions of the Scripture narrative. It is about fifty paces square, and is enclosed by a wall of no great height, formed of rough loose stones. Eight very ancient olive-trees now occupy this enclosure, some of which are of a very large size, and all exhibit symptoms of decay, clearly denoting their great age. The garden at present belongs to one of the monastic establishments, by the members of which some young trees have been planted to supply the places of those which have disappeared.

1032. *Why did our Lord, during his agony in the garden, become "exceedingly sorrowful even unto death"?*

The cause of his grief was not the fear of suffering, since he took upon himself human nature to suffer and to die for us; but the cause of his grief was the unhappy state of Judas, the scandal his disciples would take at his passion, the reprobation of the Jewish nation, and the destruction of the miserable city of Jerusalem.

1033. *Why did our Lord pray that the cup of his sufferings might pass from him?*

Because there was in the person of Jesus Christ two distinct natures—that of God, and that of man. While the former could not suffer, the latter was amenable to human anguish, under the influence of which our Saviour thus prayed.

1034. A commentator says:—"Christ our Redeemer was truly God, and as truly man. And being 'made man' by a real union of his divine person and nature to our weak and infirm human nature, he likewise took upon him our infirmities, sin excepted. We must consider him as man when we read of his being tempted in the wilderness; when he wept at the grave of Lazarus; as often as we read of his praying, and redoubling his prayer, as in the garden; when we find him affected with fear, sadness, and grief; for though, as God, he could prevent and hinder these passions and affections natural to man, yet he could permit them to touch his human nature. As he permitted himself to be seized with hunger after fasting forty days, so he permitted his human nature to be seized with fear and grief in the garden of Gethsemane.

1035. *Why did the chief priests and the captains* (i. e., *the Romans*) *covenant with Judas to betray Jesus?*

Because, although they might easily have apprehended him openly in the day-time, they feared to do so, the people being

A.C. 33.—Betrayal of Christ by Judas.

greatly divided in opinion as to the character of our Lord and likely to interfere in his behalf.

1036. The Jews and Roman governor were equally in dread of a tumult. The former, consistently with their practice of straining at gnats and swallowing camels, wished to keep themselves *legally clean for the Passover*, while they were equally desirous of crucifying Jesus *as a preliminary to its celebration*. The latter was anxious to have the province under his care in a well-ordered state, as upon his behaviour and the prosperity of the country his hopes of a "triumph" at head-quarters entirely depended. This was why the Jews and "captains" (Luke xxii. 4) "sought opportunity to betray him in the absence of the multitude."

1037. *Why did the "band" who arrested our Saviour carry lanterns?*

Because the situation of the garden, in the deep ravines on the western side of Olivet, was such, that although the full moon (at the Passover) shone, its rays would not reach the spot so as to enable them to distinguish objects clearly without their assistance.

1038. Lanterns and torches formed part of the equipment of soldiers in marches and attacks by night. Illustrations of this fact are presented by the remains of the Egyptian monuments.

1039. *Who was Pontius Pilate?*

He was the fifth Roman procurator or governor of Judea, successor of Valerius Gratus, and was appointed to his office by the Emperor Tiberius, in the thirteenth year of his reign (A.D. 28).

1040. *Why did our Saviour, in reply to the question of the high priest whether he was the Son of God* (Matt. xxvi. 64), *reply, "Thou hast said," instead of "Yes" or "No"?*

Because the former was the usual mode of delivering an answer in the affirmative.

1041. The formula of assent or affirmation was as follows:—"Thou hast said," or "Thou hast rightly said." We are informed by the traveller Arida that this is the prevailing mode of a person's expressing his assent or affirmation to this day in the vicinity of Mount Lebanon, especially when he does not wish to assert anything in express terms. It was not in the ordinary course of our Lord's practice to proclaim his own dignity, especially before sinners. He had cautioned his followers not to throw pearls before swine.

1042. *Why did Peter deny Christ?*

Because he was entirely overcome by his fears and the

A.C. 33.—Jesus Led before Pilate.

horror of the situation, when he saw his Master a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, and the whole of his followers, excepting two or three persons, dispersed.

1043. Peter's denial was the act of his lips, an act to which his heart was in no way accessory. While he disclaimed a knowledge of his Divine Master, his whole soul was torn by a sense of the treason that he was committing; accordingly he went out after the third denial "and wept bitterly." This weeping for his fault would appear to have remained a characteristic of St. Peter. He has been chosen as the New Testament model of penitents, and a tradition informs us that during the remainder of his mortal career his tears would flow whenever he heard the crowing of a cock.

1044. *Why did our Lord allude to the cock crowing in his prophetical declaration to St. Peter?*

Because of the method in use among the ancients, and especially the Romans, of dividing the night into periods, two of which latter were marked as "the first" and "second cock-crowing."

1045. The periods of the night were thus distinguished:—*Media nox* (or midnight) was the end of one and the beginning of another day; *mediæ noctes inclinatio* was about the time alluded to in "Macbeth:"—

"*Macbeth.* What is the night?
"*Lady Macbeth.* Almost *at odds with morning* which is which"—

when only the most northern stars are seen revolving; *gallicinium*, cock-crowing; *conticinium*, when they give over crowing. Thus the two cock-crowings were understood, and hence the expression, "Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice." (Mark xiv. 30.)

1046. *Why was our Lord taken before Pilate, the Roman governor?*

Jesus having been betrayed, apprehended, and found guilty of blasphemy by the Jewish Sanhedrim, was delivered to Pilate, in order to undergo the punishment of death, according to the law in that case provided.

1047. *Why did not the Jews themselves put Jesus to death as they had the will to do?*

Because the power of life and death had been taken from them by their Roman masters.

A.C. 33.—The Potters' Field Purchased.

1048. *What is the meaning of the word "Gabbatha" or "Lithostrotos," the name given to Pilate's hall of judgment?*

It signifies literally "stone-paved," is an adjective, but is applied substantively by Greek writers to denote a platform of stone.

1049. This stone pavement was a trifling but not insignificant link in the chain of the Jewish subjection to their heathen masters. It was a favourite mode of decoration with the Roman people, and Suetonius relates that Julius Cæsar even in his military expeditions took with him the materials of tesselated pavements ready prepared, that wherever he encamped they might be laid down in the prætorium. Hence it has been inferred that the Gabbatha had a tesselated pavement. That it was a roofless hall or court appears from the passage (John xviii. 29), "Then Pilate went *out* unto them" (the Jews), who, for ceremonial reasons, did not choose to expose themselves to too close a contact with the governor.

1050. *Why was the "Aceldama," or "potters' field," purchased with the thirty pieces of silver, which Judas, in his despair, returned to his employers, the Jewish priests?*

1. Because this field was an exhausted quarry of fuller's earth, no longer of use for its original purpose, and, therefore,

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to be easily purchased. 2. Because the still extant properties of the soil were good for rapidly decomposing bodies deposited therein. 3. Because the Jews were forced blindly, or in spite of themselves, to fulfil the word of the prophecy even to the very letter. (Refer to Zech. xi. 12, 13.)

51. The potters' field was called Aceldama, or Hokeldema, or *the field of blood*, because purchased with blood-money. It was used to bury those who as

strangers could have no entrance into the cemeteries of the Jews. Being filled with hatred and revenge against Jesus Christ, it would be absurd to suppose that they did this with a charitable motive, "to bury strangers." Their intention, according to St. Jerome, was to disgrace Jesus, by thus keeping alive in the minds of the people that he was sold by one of his own disciples and delivered up to an ignominious death. The piece of land was of small value, having been exhausted in making pottery ware. There still remains on the spot a charnel house. In the middle ages the remains of its soil used to be transported to Italy, in order to its being spread over newly-formed cemeteries. This was the case at Pisa.

1052. *Why did Pilate, who entertained no hatred personally towards our Lord, deliver him to the soldiers to be scourged?*

1. Because it was part of the usual mode of procedure, that, when a criminal was condemned to the cross, he should previously suffer the penalty of scourging. 2. Because he wished, by this apparent severity, to soften the minds of the Jews towards Jesus, and induce them to consent to his liberation.

1053. *Why did the soldiers mock Jesus, putting a scarlet cloak upon him, a reed in his hand, and a crown of thorns upon his head?*

Because, belonging to the basest dregs of humanity, and hearing that Jesus had been condemned as an aspirant to kingly honours, they thought to curry favour with the Jews by a burlesque of the ceremony of coronation.

This mocking of a person condemned to death for alleged treasonable acts, was a very common practice in the East, and obtains to the present day among the Persians. Morier says:—"Mohammed Zemaun Khan was carried before the king. When he had reached the camp the king ordered Mohammed Khan, chief of his camel artillery, to put a mock crown upon the rebel's head, bazubends, or armlets on his arms, a sword by his side, to mount him upon an ass with his face towards the tail, then to parade him throughout the camp and to exclaim, 'This is he who wanted to be the king.' After this was over, and the people had mocked and insulted him, he was led before the king, who called for his looties and ordered them to turn him into ridicule by making him dance and make antics against his will. He then ordered that whoever chose might spit in his face. After this he received the bastinado on the soles of his feet." How terribly does this scene recall the mockings of our Lord!

1054. *Why did the Jews spit in our Lord's face during his humiliation.*

Because it was an act of thorough contumely—a punishment which, in their opinion, carried with it a lasting disgrace.

1055. Like all their other acts it the more truly stamped the character and identity of the Messiah who was to come. This very act, wicked as it was, had been

foreshown as one that should be permitted against his person (see Isaiah l. 6), "I hid not my face from shame and spitting." The act of spitting, even upon the ground, was considered insulting by many Eastern nations—how much more the spitting in the face.

1056. *Why was our Lord sent by Pilate bound to Herod?*

Because he was very desirous to rid himself of the odious task of condemning and punishing Jesus, and thought that he had thus found a ready means of doing so.

1057. Pilate eagerly caught at the fact that Jesus was a Galilean, and consequently a subject of Herod's. The Roman law strictly prohibited a man's being tried or punished by any other than his proper ruler.

1058. *Why did Herod mock Jesus?*

Because, so far from regarding him as a character dangerous to the state, or likely to subvert it, he mistook our Lord's meekness for imbecility.

1059. This very meekness, however, had been pointed out by the prophets in that well-known passage, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb is dumb before its shearer, so opened he not his mouth."

1060. *Why did Pilate, partly against his own inclination, condemn Jesus to death?*

Because he was actuated by a motive of self-preservation, being afraid as much of a rebellion of the Jews, incited by their priests, as of their representing him to Cæsar as one disaffected to the imperial rule.

1061. *Why did the act of sending Jesus to Herod have the effect of reconciling the latter with Pilate?*

Because Herod took it as a compliment on the part of Pilate, and was greatly pleased that the Roman governor should respect his (Herod's) territorial prerogatives.

1062. There were special reasons why Herod should be pleased with the conduct of Pilate. The former, a weak but ambitious prince, stood then greatly in need of the countenance of the powerful Roman soldier. His guilty connection with Herodias had involved him in a network of intrigues and plots laid for his destruction. Moreover, urged on by Herodias, he aimed at an extension of his territorial power. Some time after these events he was induced to visit Rome, and to solicit from the Emperor Caligula the title of King of Judea. Doubtless he felt the importance of securing the friendship of Pilate, and this may have been at the root of the motives which induced the reconciliation.

A.C. 33.—The Carriage of the Cross.

1063. *Why was the murderer Barabbas released?*

Without any sanction on the part of the law, it had grown customary for the governor to release a prisoner at the Feast of the Passover. Pilate, in his conviction of the innocence of Jesus, wished to throw his death on others, and, therefore, gave the people the option of the life of Barabbas or that of Christ.

1064. Instigated by the priests and their own vile passions, they saved the murderer, and demanded the execution of our Lord. Should it be worth asking, Who was Barabbas? it may be sufficient to say that he formed one of a class of bravos, or dagger-men, who, availing themselves of the unsettled state of Judea, lived under the name of Sicarii, in a state of guerilla warfare, which they carried on under various pretexts, both against the Romans and their own countrymen.

1065. *Why is Jesus Christ represented by St. Matthew as carrying his own cross, while St. John describes its carriage by one Simon, a man of Cyrene?*

Because of the different nature of the accounts received of these facts by the two evangelists. The former represents what took place at the commencement of this dolorous procession, when the cross was undoubtedly laid upon Jesus. The latter relates what he *saw*, when Jesus having fallen more than once beneath its load, the man of Cyrene was impressed by the guard and made to assist in the carriage of the cross.

1066. St. Luke says (xxiii. 26), "They laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus." Whether it was that they made Simon carry the whole cross, or whether he only bore it up behind is not expressed.

1067. *Why did our Lord bid the pious women who followed him on his way to Calvary weeping, "to weep for themselves and for their children"?*

Because he foresaw that within the lifetime of many of them those dreadful events would come to pass connected with the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

1068. Christians are not forbidden by this text to weep in compassion for the sufferings of Christ; but they are not to let those sufferings cause them to forget the end for which they were undertaken, namely the salvation of human souls.—(Calmet.)

A.C. 33.—The Crucifixion.

1069. *Why was the mount, or mound, of Calvary so designated?*

Because the Latin word *Calvaria* (in English *Calvary*, in Greek *Kranion*, and in Hebrew *Golgotha*) signified "the place

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of a skull"; and the spot was marked by the frequent presence of that sign and emblem of the many malefactors who had been decapitated there. (Upon this see also par. 1111.)

1070. *Why was Jesus Christ crucified at Mount Calvary?*

Because that was the common place of execution, and was adjacent to the city.

1071. According to an old tradition preserved by, among others, the venerable Bede, this spot was the very one wherein Adam had been interred; the foot of the cross

resting exactly upon the skull of the first man, or upon the portion of earth which had replaced it.

1072. *Why did our Lord suffer death by crucifixion and not by any of the modes usual among the Jews?*

Because his death, although brought about by the urgent and riotous solicitations of the Jews, was really the act of their Roman masters.

1073. "The cross," says Jahn, "was the punishment inflicted by the Romans on servants who had perpetrated crimes, on robbers, assassins, and rebels, among which last Jesus was reckoned, on the ground of his making himself king or MESSIAH.

The words in which the sentence was given were as follows:—"Thou shalt go to the cross." The person who was subjected to this punishment was deprived of all his clothes, excepting something around the loins. In this state of nudity he was beaten with rods, but more generally with whips. Such was the severity of this flagellation that numbers died under it. Jesus was crowned with thorns and made the subject of mockery, but nothing of this kind could be legally done; or in other words, insults of this kind were not among the ordinary attendants of crucifixion. They were owing, in this case, merely to the petulant spirit of the Roman oldiers."

1074. *Why did our Saviour submit to these extra degradations which he could, as God, have prevented?*

Because he chose to set an example to his disciples and future followers, of an entire and perfect abnegation.

1075. The criminal having been beaten was subjected to the further suffering of being obliged to carry the cross himself to the place of punishment, which was commonly a hill near the public way, and out of the city. The place of execution at Jerusalem was a hill to the north-west of the city. The cross or post, otherwise called the *unpropitious*, or *infamous* tree, consisted of a piece of wood erected perpendicularly, and intersected by another at right angles, near the top, so as somewhat to resemble the letter T. The crime for which the person suffered was inscribed on the transverse piece near the top of the perpendicular one.

There is no mention made in ancient writers of anything on which the feet of the person crucified rested. Near the middle, however, of the perpendicular beam there projected a piece of wood on which he sat, and which answered as a support to the body, since its weight might otherwise have torn away the hands from the nails driven through them. The cross which was erected at the place of punishment, being there firmly fixed in the ground, rarely exceeded ten feet in height. The victim, perfectly naked, was elevated to the small projection in the middle, the hands were then bound by a rope round the transverse beam, and nailed through the palm.*

* The above is Jahn's account of the ordinary mode of procedure; others say that the cross being laid upon the ground the victim was stretched upon and

A.C. 33.—Circumstances attendant upon Death by Crucifixion.

The position which is taken by some, viz., that the persons who suffered crucifixion were not in some instances fastened to the cross by nails, but were merely bound to it by ropes, cannot be proved by the testimony of any ancient writer whatever. That the feet as well as the hands were fastened to the cross by means of nails, is expressly stated in the play of Plautus, entitled "Mostellaria," Act ii. Sc. 1. 12. In regard to the nailing of the feet, it may be furthermore observed that Gregory Nazianzen has asserted that one nail only was driven through both of them, but Cyprian ("De Passione"), who had been a personal witness to crucifixions, and is consequently in this case the better authority, states on the contrary, that two nails or spikes were driven, one through each foot. Crucifixion was not only the most ignominious, it was likewise the most cruel of punishments. So much so, that Cicero exclaims, "Away with the very thought of it from the minds of men!"—(In Verrem, V. 64 et 66.)

1076. *Why was crucifixion the most painful as well as the most ignominious of deaths?*

Because it was the most lingering; the victims frequently surviving till the third day, and then dying of mere exhaustion.

1077. No wounds are more painful than those inflicted in crucifixion. They are at once what surgeons term *punctured*, *lacerated*, and *contused*, which are the three most serious varieties of that species of injury. Independently of the grave nature of the wounds themselves, their danger is much increased when they occur in such parts as the palm of the hand or the sole of the foot, in which bones, fasciæ, tendons, and their sheaths, predominate; tissues which, when so injured, reflect the mischief into the constitution immediately and most violently, giving rise to unmanageable traumatic fever. In many very sensitive constitutions, the immediate shock of the act of crucifixion itself would hardly be rallied from. If however, the victim should have sufficient constitutional power to support reaction, the intense agony produced by the weight of the body suspended on the raw parts in contact with the nails in the hands, and by the inflammatory swelling of the palmar and plantar tissues pressing against the unyielding iron, and the position of the body, is one of the principal agents in the production of that exhaustion which terminates the frightful scene.

If the sufferer lived many hours, the injured parts after ulcerating would become gangrenous; great general depression of the vital powers would at once come on, with hiccough and cold sweats; the circulation would be hurried and feeble; the breathing short and frequent; and the patient would rapidly sink, the feeling of pain being lessened, but the sense of anxiety and prostration augmented towards the last.—(Dr. Dorrington in "People's Bible Dictionary.")

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fastened to it. When this had been done, the lower end was placed near the hole or socket prepared for it, and the cross, with its fearful burden, drawn up by a rope and pulleys.

A.C. 33.—The Title upon the Cross.

1078. *Why was the cross of Jesus Christ placed in the midst, between those of the two robbers?*

As an additional mark of disgrace, to show that in the opinion of his executioners he was the greatest malefactor of the three.

1079. *Why does St. Matthew say* (xxvii. 34) *that both the robbers blasphemed, while the other evangelists speak of only one of them doing so?*

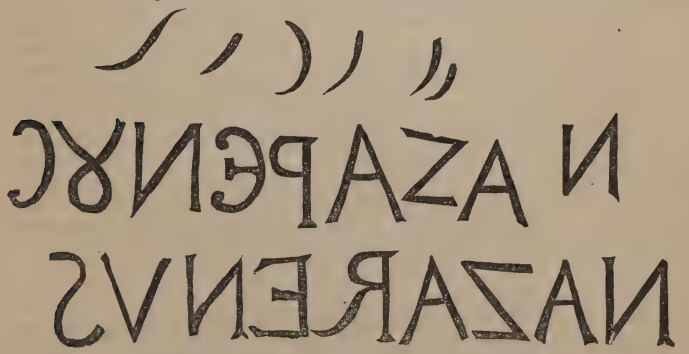
At first both reproached our Saviour, but upon witnessing the awful prodigies incidental to the crucifixion, one of them was converted and craved forgiveness.

1080. *Why was the death of our Saviour by crucifixion as degrading to the Jews as it was ignominious to the person who endured it?*

Because as not being a Hebrew punishment, but essentially a Roman one, it marked most clearly the entire subjugation—morally and materially—of the Jewish people to the yoke of their Gentile conquerors.

1081. The punishment continued in use no longer than the reign of Constantine, when it was abolished by the influence of the Christian religion. Examples of it are found in the early part of that emperor's reign, but the reverence which at a later period he was led to feel for the cross induced him to put an end to the practice. Such was a worthy effect of the cross, which is the symbol of the largest philanthropy and the truest love.

1082. *Why was the title or inscription set over the cross*



PORTION OF THE TITLE, OR TITULUS, OVER THE CROSS.

A.C. 33.—The Title upon the Cross.

written in three languages, namely, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin?

Because people of all languages had been collected at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, and according to the Roman law it was necessary that the cause of death should be set forth intelligibly to all passers-by.

1083. The tablet or *titulus* bearing this inscription is said to have been found by Helen (called St. Helen), mother of Constantine the Great, and by her conveyed to Rome, where it was preserved in the church of the Holy Cross; and at length, in 1492, to have been anew brought to light, being found in the vaulted roof of the same church while it was undergoing repairs. From the annexed cut, which is a fac-simile of a part of this title, it will be observed that the words, conformably to ancient custom in Judea, are read from right to left. The inscription corresponds with the statement of St. John, presenting traces of the Hebrew first, then the Greek, and then the Latin. The Hebrew is the least, the Latin the most distinct. The last presents in full the word NAZARENUS—"the Nazarene"—with two letters, apparently R and E, which with X, would make REX, or *king*; so that, as St. John states, the title thus appears to have run, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," and, consequently, contained the scoffing implication that Jesus had suffered death for high treason against the Roman sovereignty.

1084. *Why did Pilate refuse the request of the Jews to alter the title* "JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS," *which he had set up over the cross?*

Because he was exasperated with them for their importunity and obstinacy in forcing him against his own sense of justice to put Jesus to death.

1085. Nothing could be more ignominious to the Jews than to behold one of their nation, and evidently a strict observer of the law, put to death *because he was their king, and they did not wish him to reign over them.* Their very violence caused them to overreach themselves. Had they been more moderate, Pilate would have gratified them, as he had every wish to do, consistent with his self-respect.

1086. *Why did the soldiers divide among them the garments of Jesus?*

As a greater mark of ignominy; such a course being permitted only in the cases of the vilest and most worthless of malefactors — with men who possessed nothing more than their garments.

1087. In order to be spared this last insult, it was usual for the friends of the criminal to pay a trifle to the executioners. That our Lord suffered himself to be thus humbled— hat he permitted his disciples and "brethren" to be driven from

A.C. 33.—The Penitent Thief Pardoned.

him, whether through their own fears or otherwise, was consistent with that mysterious love of suffering and humiliation, which commenced at Nazareth, and was exhibited throughout his whole earthly career. Of course this division of Christ's garment was another proof from prophecy of the identity of Jesus as the Messiah.

"The dress of the Arabs in this part of the Holy Land, and, indeed, throughout all Syria, is simple and uniform; it consists of a blue shirt, descending below the knees, the legs and feet being exposed, or the latter being sometimes covered with the ancient cothurnus or heavy buskin. A cloak is worn of coarse and heavy camel's-hair cloth, almost universally decorated with broad black and white stripes, passing vertically down the back; this is of one square piece, with holes for the arms; it has a seam down the back; made without this seam it is considered of greater value. Here then we behold, perhaps, the form and materials of our Saviour's garment for which the soldiers cast lots, being 'without seam, woven from the top throughout.' It was the most ancient dress of the inhabitants of the country."—(Clarke's Travels.)

1088. *Why did Jesus promise the penitent thief that he should that day be with him in paradise, when it is certain that our Lord did not for some time afterwards ascend into heaven?*

Because he was pleased, in reward for the faith and testimony of that poor criminal, exhibited under such astonishing circumstances, to grant him a full pardon of his sins, both as to their guilt and punishment; and by a special privilege to admit him immediately after death to the company of the saints, which company, or the place where it was assembled, was made *paradise* by the presence of Christ.

1089. Respecting this visit of the soul of Christ to the place of abode of the saints of the old law, see 1 Peter iii. 19.

1090. *Why did our Saviour shortly before his death upon the cross address his mother, and commend her to the care of St. John?* (John xix. 26.)

St. Chrysostom answers this question thus:—"Though there were other holy women standing by the cross, Jesus Christ takes notice of none but his mother, teaching us by this what we owe to our parents, and that we are not to fail in our love to them even in our extremity."—(Hom. 84. in Joannem.)

1091. History informs us what we might naturally suppose to have been the case, that the Holy Virgin went to the "house" of St. John (John xix. 27), and for the remainder of her earthly life lived under his roof. This is said to have been in the vicinity of Mount Carmel.

A.C. 33.—The Vinegar and Gall Offered.

1092. *Why did the Jews, in offering "vinegar mingled with gall" to Jesus upon the cross, place it upon a stick of hyssop?*

Because the day, being a high day—the eve of a great Sabbath—they thought thus to escape defilement.

1093. The fact of the Jews being upon the field of execution exposed them to probable defilement. In the Mosaical law the hyssop was largely used in purifications. See Exod. xii. 22, where a bunch of hyssop is directed to be dipped in blood and struck on the lintels and the two side-posts of the doors of the houses in which the Israelites resided. Also, Lev. xiv. 4, 6, 52, in the case of the cleansing of lepers; and Num. xix. 6, 18, in preparing the waters of separation. By placing the beverage upon the long, reed-like hyssop, they concluded that thus they avoided actual contact with the suffering and almost expiring body of our Saviour.

1094. *Why did our Lord refuse the vinegar mingled with gall which was offered to him upon the cross?*

Because he would by that last act of self-denial consummate the sacrifice of himself to the offended majesty of heaven.

1095. The Jews in the times under consideration, while they were under the jurisdiction of the Romans, were in the habit of giving the criminal, before the commencement of his sufferings, a medicated drink of wine and myrrh. The object of this was to produce intoxication, and thereby render the pains of crucifixion less sensible to the sufferer. This beverage was refused by our Saviour for another reason than that stated above. He chose to die with the faculties of his mind undisturbed and unclouded. It should be remarked that this sort of drink, which was probably offered out of kindness, was different from the vinegar which was subsequently offered to our Saviour by the Roman soldiers.

1096. *Why is the period of our Lord's suffering upon the cross, which we know was from twelve at noon till three in the afternoon, called "from the sixth to the ninth hour"?*

Because in the Jewish horology the day was reckoned from sunrise to sunset, the former period being called the first hour, and the latter the twelfth; at the equinox the first hour answered to our seven o'clock A.M.; and our twelfth or noontide to their sixth. Thus from twelve to three was, in the phraseology of that day and season, from the sixth to the ninth hour.

1097. *Why did Jesus Christ, at the moment of his death upon the cross, cry out "with a loud voice"?*

In this our Redeemer confirms what he had said to Pilate.

A.C. 33.—The Death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross.

"*I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again;*" for he cried with a loud voice, and at the very hour of the evening sacrifice, to show that it was the effect of his own will that he died.—(St. John Chrysostom, Hom. 89.)

1098. The centurion mentioned by St. Mark (xv. 39) was so convinced that, humanly considered, no sufferer upon the cross at such a moment could cry out with a *loud* voice, that he was at once made to believe in the supernatural character of Jesus, and exclaimed, "Truly this man was the Son of God." This centurion, according to St. Chrysostom, was afterwards a martyr for Christ.

1099. *Why was it that our Saviour survived so short a time after his being nailed to the cross?*

Because, physically speaking, of the extremely exhausted state in which his highly-impressible nervous system must have been at the time of his crucifixion.

1100. "It is impossible for us," says Dr. Dorrington, "at all to appreciate the depressing and exhausting effects of the mental agony with which the Saviour of the world contemplated the awful termination of his earthly career—an agony of which we have seen such evidence in the garden of Gethsemane the previous evening, and in his last cry upon the cross. Great demands were made upon his bodily and mental energies during the last days of his life—the total loss of that rest so necessary to nerve the body the night before his trial—the cruelties and outrages that preceded the crucifixion, and his utter separation from the expression of all human sympathy and encouragement after his capture—all acting upon a nervous system the most finely tempered and acutely sensitive the world ever saw would necessarily leave him in a state of prostration incapable of long bearing the mortal agonies of the cross."

1101. *Why did not the soldiers, as was the usual custom, break the legs of Jesus Christ as he hung upon the cross?*

1. Because there was no necessity for it, he being already dead. 2. Because they were withheld by the hand of God from doing so, it having been prophesied that "not a bone of him shall be broken." (Exod. xii. 46.)

1102. Although the passage in Exodus applied to the treatment of the paschal lamb, its reference to this particular circumstance in our Lord's passion is declared by the evangelist, who emphatically states that it was done, or omitted to be done, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Ordinarily the crucified person remained suspended upon the cross till he died, and the corpse had become putrid;

A.C. 33.—The Flowing of the Water and the Blood.

while he exhibited any signs of life he was watched by a guard, but they left him when it appeared that he was dead. An exception, however, to this general practice was made by the Romans in favour of the Jews, whose laws prescribed the interment of criminals before the next dawn; and in Judea accordingly crucified persons were buried on the same day. When, therefore, there was not a prospect that they would die on the day of crucifixion, the executioners hastened the extinction of life, sometimes by kindling a fire under the cross so as to suffocate them with the smoke, at others by letting loose wild beasts upon them, or by breaking their bones upon the cross with a mallet, as upon an anvil, or by piercing them with a spear, in order that they might be at once buried."—(Jahn.)

1103. *Why did the soldier pierce our Lord's side with a spear?*

Because that was the most effectual way to ascertain whether the victim had expired or was still alive.

1104. Besides the mystical meaning of the act which followed, namely, the flowing out of blood and water, which typified the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the piercing of the side of Jesus is a very important part in the history of the crucifixion, inasmuch as the circumstances attending it preclude the possibility of his having been removed from the cross before death, and, therefore, of his having been resuscitated—a rationalistic mode of explaining the resurrection. Modern pathologists have observed facts which go to prove that the flowing out of blood and water from the side was a natural occurrence under the circumstances, and that it could have taken place only in the case of a subject *already some time dead.*

1105. *Why is the fact of the flowing of the blood and water from the wound in our Saviour's side related only by St. John?*

Because he was the only evangelist who actually witnessed the death of Jesus Christ, and this was a circumstance of which only an eye-witness would have taken notice.

1106. "This is just such a circumstance," says the eminent medical authority whom we have before quoted, "as, from not being necessary to the general truth of the story, might easily be omitted from gospels proceeding from persons who did not behold the crucifixion; while it is just the kind of event that an eye-witness like John, who seems to have hung about the cross of his Master with touching fidelity, would note at the time, and commit to writing afterwards. This difference between the synoptical and John's gospel is so accordant with our general experience of the manner in which historical narratives of the same event come to differ, as to afford the most satisfactory kind of testimony to those who understand the general nature of historical evidence."

A.C. 33.—Prodigies following thereupon.

1107. *Why was the veil of the temple rent in twain at the moment of our Lord's death?*

1. Because at that moment, by the very fact of the Lord's death, the old dispensation was done away with, the temple, with its ceremonial worship, now being rendered useless, and being superseded by the new law and testament. 2. As a natural result of the earthquake which ensued, when the God of nature yielded up his human existence for the sins of mankind.

1108. "About one yard and a half distance from the hole in which the foot of the cross was fixed, is seen that memorable cleft in the rock made by the earthquake which happened at the suffering of Jesus Christ, when the rocks rent and the very graves were opened. This cleft, as to what now appears of it, is about a span wide at its upper part and two deep, after which it closes; but it opens again below, as you may see in another chapel contiguous to the side of Calvary, and runs down to an unknown depth in the earth. That this rent was made by the earthquake that happened at our Lord's passion, there is only tradition to prove; but that it is a natural and genuine breach, and not counterfeited by any art, the sense and reason of every one that sees it may convince him, for the sides of it fit like two tallies to each other; and yet it runs in such intricate windings as could not be well counterfeited by art, nor arrived at by any instruments."—(Maundrell's "Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.")

"The far end of this chapel, called the chapel of St. John, is confined with the foot of Calvary, where, on the left side of the altar, there is a cleft in the rock. The insides do testify that art had no hand therein, each side to the other being answerably rugged; and these were inaccessible to the workmen. That before spoken of, in the chapel below, is a part of this which reaches, as they say, to the centre."—(Sandy's Travels.)

As there were in the temple two parts of the sanctuary, so there were two veils, or partition walls. The first sanctuary, called the *holy*, was separated by a veil from that part of the temple called the *court of the Israelites*. Into this outward sanctuary, called "holy," the priests that were in office entered every day. The second interior sanctuary, called the *holy of holies*, was also separated from the outward sanctuary by another veil. Both these veils seem to have been rent at Christ's death; and by their being broken down was signified first that the ceremonies of the ancient law were to be abolished by the law of Christ, and also that heaven should be open to all.

1109. *Why were the graves opened as one of the effects of the earthquake which ensued upon our Lord's death?*

1. Because supernaturally the death of Christ was the cause of the opening of the prison-doors of the grave, he being "the first-fruits of them that slept," and the one only means by which the dead could rise again to immortal life. 2. Because

A.C. 33.—The Site of the Crucifixion.

naturally, the tombs being generally excavated in the face of the rocks, and enclosed like cupboards with a door, standing perpendicularly, the shock of an earthquake would, as one of its first effects, throw open such doors.

1110. These doors were fastened with a large and broad stone rolled against them. It was at the shutting up of the sepulchre with this stone that mourning began, and after it was thus shut it was not lawful to open it.

1111. *Why was the site of the crucifixion called "Golgotha," or the place of the skull?*

Because, according to Eastern travellers, and especially Buckingham, it was a mound, or nodule of earth, resembling in form a human skull.

1112. It has been thought that "place of a skull," or "*the* skull," meant a place of execution, or a place ordinarily appropriated to executions. But the above writer says, "had that been the case there would have been no need to specify it so particularly. It would have been mentioned simply as Golgotha, or the Golgotha. Each of the evangelists, however, speak of it as a place that required pointing out —as an exceptional spot, in fact. It was formerly without the city, on its north-west side; but is now included within the walls which have in later ages been built up by its more recent possessors."

The history of the discovery and identification of Golgotha, or Mount Calvary is very interesting. The following is abridged from Dr. Kitto:—

The memory of distinguished places is among the least perishable of earthly things. Thermopylæ and Runnymede are yet, and will ever be known. With how much more reason Calvary! At the first there were, not only in Jerusalem and Palestine, but in all parts of the earth, bosoms which had found for it a shrine. Fathers would convey their knowledge and their impressions to sons; one generation and one church to another; and thus from age to age there would be a regular transmission of the essential facts of the case; till at length the tradition became fixed in history, and a splendid edifice was raised in commemoration of the great events which rendered Golgotha the most remarkable spot on the whole earth. After the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans it became a heathen city. Statues and temples to Jupiter were erected, and upon Calvary itself a fane dedicated to Venus was set up. This was done both from contempt of the Christians, and policy towards the conquered Jews. The heathens thought that by thus insulting the memory of Jesus they should conciliate his executioners. However that might be, the act served to determine the situation of Calvary. With the final destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70, both Jews and Christians were driven from the holy places. But now commenced the long series of pilgrimages from distant places to the Holy Land, which have continued even to the present hour * Eusebius (A.D. 315) informs us that Christians visited Jerusalem from all regions of the earth, for the object of paying respect to the scenes of our Lord's sufferings and death.

* There is at present (1859) in London, a gentleman—a Mr. Wigley—whose *status* is "Guide and cicerone in pilgrimages to Palestine, etc."

A.C. 33.—The Burial Place of Jesus Christ.

Early in the fourth century Eusebius and Jerome write down the tradition, and fix the locality in their works. We now come to the testimony of the Emperor Constantine, and his mother Helena (St. Helen). The latter when very far advanced in life visited Jerusalem, for the express purpose of erecting a church on the spot where the Lord Jesus had been crucified. She had previously learned that the holy places had been heaped up and concealed by the heathen, and she resolved to attempt to bring them to light. On her arrival at Jerusalem she inquired diligently of the inhabitants. Yet the search was uncertain and difficult, in consequence of the obstructions by which the heathen had sought to render the spot unknown. These being all removed, the sacred sepulchre was discovered, and by its side three crosses with the tablet bearing the inscription written by Pilate. On the site thus ascertained was erected, whether by Constantine, or by Helena, certainly by Roman influence and treasure, a splendid and extensive Christian temple. Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, says, "the emperor's mother erected over the place where the sepulchre was, a most magnificent church, and called it New Jerusalem, building *it opposite to that old* deserted Jerusalem." This church was completed and dedicated, A.D. 335. It was a great occasion for the whole Christian world. After a lapse of two centuries and a half, this church of the Holy Sepulchre was burnt by the Persians (A.D. 614). It was shortly afterwards rebuilt by Modestus, with resources supplied by John Eleemor, patriarch of Alexandria. The Basilica, or Martyrion, erected under Constantine, remained as before. The Mahometans next became masters of Jerusalem. At length Harun-al-Rashid made over to Charlemagne the jurisdiction of the Holy Sepulchre. Palestine again became the scene of battles and bloodshed. Muez, of the Fatimites, transferred the seat of his empire to Cairo, when Jerusalem fell into the hands of new masters, and the Holy Sepulchre is said to have been again set on fire. It was fully destroyed at the command of the third of the Fatimite kalifs in Egypt, the building being razed to its foundations. In the reign of his successor it was rebuilt, being completed A.D. 1048; but instead of its former magnificent Basilica over the place of Golgotha, a small chapel only now graced the spot.

The Crusades soon began. The crusaders regarded the edifices connected with the sepulchre as too contracted, and erected a stately temple, the walls and general form of which are admitted to remain to the present day. So recently, however, as A.D. 1808, the church of the Holy Sepulchre was partly consumed by fire; but being rebuilt by the Greeks, it now offers no traces of its recent desolation.*

1113. *Who was Joseph of Arimathea?*

He was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and secretly a disciple of Jesus, but who did not consent to the judgment of that tribunal, which condemned our Lord to be crucified.

1114. Arimathea, the place of this disciple's birth, lay in the territory of Benjamin, on the mountain range of Ephraim, at a short distance south of Jerusalem, and near to Gibeah. Joseph is described by St. Luke as a good man and just, and it is probable that this, his character among all parties of the Jews, preserved him from

* Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature."

A.C. 33.—The Burial of Jesus Christ.

their enmity, when in conjunction with Nicodemus he went to Pilate, and besought the body of Jesus, in order to its honourable interment in his own sepulchre. Tradition represents Joseph of Arimathea as among the earliest propagators of the gospel in the west. He is said to have landed in Britain, and to have preached to our ancestors.

1115. *Why was the permission of Pilate necessary before the body of Jesus could be removed from the cross for interment?*

Because, by the Roman law, the bodies of crucified persons were disentitled to burial, and were generally left upon the cross, until devoured by birds of prey or prowling beasts.

1116. It has been already stated that the Jews had the privilege, generally, of interring the bodies of crucified persons; it is probable that the friends of Jesus might fear that in his case a special permission would be necessary.

1117. *Why is it stated of the new sepulchre wherein Joseph of Arimathea interred the body of Jesus, that no man had yet been laid therein?* (John xix. 41)

1. Because thereby all doubt might be removed that it was Jesus himself who arose from the dead on the third day, and not some other person who had been placed there; or that he arose by the virtue of some other body reposing there.

1118. As was the case with the person who was being buried in the tomb of Elisha; which circumstance is thus related in 2 Kings xiii. 20:—

"And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

"And it came to pass as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet."

2. Because the awful sanctity of the body of Jesus demanded the exclusive possession of a new sepulchre; he being perfectly free from any, even the slightest, element of corruption.

To have placed the sacred body of our Lord in a tomb previously used, would seem to be something utterly repugnant to our feelings as Christians. This was, in all probability, the sentiment of the disciple, and hence the result.

1119. *Why did the Jews make the request to Pilate that he would set a guard of soldiers over the tomb of Jesus?*

Because, notwithstanding their affected dread lest the apostles—paralyzed with fear, and hiding themselves "in an upper room"—should come by night and steal him away, they

had some real apprehensions that, after all, he might be able to raise himself to life again, as he had predicted.

1120. The wonderful prodigies which occurred at the moment of Christ's death might well cause such misgivings, and were the very natural preludes to such a phenomenon. But the Jews, in adopting this foolish precaution, again outwitted themselves; for they thus subpœnaed, as it were, a set of most disinterested witnesses of the resurrection. The guard ordered by Pilate, in compliance with the request of the Jews on this occasion, is supposed to have been the company of Roman soldiers destined for the protection of the temple. Aquinas exclaims, "See how, beyond the possibility of contradiction, these precautions prove the reality of Christ's resurrection, and how the inveterate enemies of Christ become unwilling witnesses of it; for since the sepulchre was guarded, there was no possibility of any deceit on the part of the disciples. Now if the least deceit was utterly impracticable, then, indeed, is Christ our Lord infallibly risen; and to remove even the least possibility of deceit, Pilate would not let the soldiers alone seal the monument—the Jews assist thereat, sealing the stone at its entrance with the public seal."

1121. *What was the end of Pilate?*

The circumstances attendant upon the removal of Pilate from his government of Judea are thus collected by Jahn in his "Hebrew Commonwealth":—

1122. "An impostor, or false Messiah, made his appearance soon after this in Samaria (it was about A.C. 35—the year that St. Stephen was stoned) and under pretence of digging up the sacred vessels of Moses, which were supposed to have been buried in mount Gerizim, collected a body of armed men. A great number assembled at Tirabatha, in order to go to mount Gerizim; but Pilate, with a body of horse and foot, intercepted their march, slew the greater part of the deluded multitude in the first attack, and dispersed the rest. A few were taken prisoners, and put to death at the command of Pilate. Upon which the Samaritans sent an embassy to Vitellius, proconsul of Syria, and complained of the violence of Pilate. Vitellius, thereupon, A.C. 37, sent Marcellus to Judea, to assume the office of procurator, and ordered Pilate to Rome to answer the accusations brought against him. Caius Caligula, who succeeded Tiberius in the government, A.C. 37 or 38, banished Pilate to Vienne in Gaul, where he is said to have committed suicide."

1123. *How was the proconsul of Syria enabled to supersede the procurator of Judea, as in the preceding account?*

Ordinarily, the procurator was under the rule of the proconsul. Judea forming part of the province of Syria, Pilate, as its procurator, was the subordinate officer of Vitellius, who held the proconsulship of the whole province.

1124. Sometimes the procurators were invested with a superior power against the proconsul; but this was an exceptional case, and did not obtain in the instance of Pilate.—(Carr's "Manual of Roman Antiquities.")

A.C. 33.—Resurrection of Christ.

1125. *Why are the holy women represented as bringing, "on the first day of the week," spices to the sepulchre, when the body of Jesus had already been embalmed?*

Because, although a large quantity of the embalming spices had been used by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (John xix. 39), it is probable that great haste and precipitation had been used by them, "for fear of the Jews." The devout Magdalene and her companions were anxious to rectify any defects which that haste might have caused.

1126. *Why does St. John speak of himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and "that other disciple"?* (John xx. 2, 3.)

From a motive of modesty, he not liking to mention his own name too frequently in the sacred narrative.

1127. *Why did the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead take place on the first day of the week?*

To mark the commencement of the new era, and to transfer the weekly rest, or "Sabbath," from the seventh to the first day.

1128. God rested from the work of creation on the seventh day, "and hallowed it." (Exod. xx.) Christ, having completed the work of redemption, rose from the tomb on the first day of the week, and hallowed it for all Christians. The *time* at which Jesus Christ ascended from the tomb was just at daybreak, or a little before it; "very early in the morning." (Mark xvi. 2.) "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn." (Matt. xxviii. 1.) (See 1294.)

1129. *Why did the angel of the Lord descend from heaven, "and roll back the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre"?* (Matt. xxviii. 2.)

Our Lord had risen from the tomb previous to the descent of the angel, and without rending it. The stone was removed for the purpose of affording to the holy women and other spectators an opportunity of entrance, and the necessary evidence that Christ was no longer there.

1130. The appearance of the angel, whose "countenance was like lightning," and whose "raiment was white as snow," must have been truly appalling to the Roman guard. The soldiers, before whom the world had bent its knee, now shook like timid hares, "and became as dead men." And the angel answered and said unto the women (the soldiers were not worthy to be addressed by the heavenly messenger), "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

A.C. 33.—His Appearance to Mary Magdalene.

1131. *Why did the angel say to the holy women, "He goeth before you into Galilee."* (Matt. xxviii. 7.)

Because the name of Galilee interpreted means transmigration or passage, and was significant of the Christian warfare.

1132. Our Saviour, on the day of his resurrection, showed himself alive five different times:—1. To Mary Magdalene; 2. To the women leaving the sepulchre; 3. To St. Peter; 4. To the two disciples going to Emmaus; 5. To the disciples assembled together when the two returned from Emmaus. And after the day of his resurrection, before he ascended into heaven, he appeared five other times:—1. After eight days, when Thomas was present; 2. When the seven disciples were fishing on the sea of Tiberias; 3. To the eleven on Mount Tabor; 4. In Jerusalem on the day of the ascension; and 5. On the same day on Mount Olivet, when he was taken from them.

1133. *Why is particular mention made of the linen clothes lying?* (John xx. 5.)

Because that, according to St. Chrysostom, was of itself a miracle. Christ's body having been buried with myrrh, the linen would adhere to it as firmly as pitch, so that it would be impossible to steal or take away the body *without the linen cloth.*

1134. *Why does St. John, still speaking of himself as "that other disciple," say that having witnessed the miracle of the resurrection "he saw and believed"?* (John xx. 8.)

Because he had not hitherto accepted the divine nature of our Lord to its full extent, which he now confessed himself able to do.

1135. Although the apostles had so often heard their master speak in the plainest terms of his resurrection, still, being so accustomed to parables, they did not understand him, and imagined something else was meant by these words.

1136. *Why did Mary Magdalene fail to recognize Jesus when she saw him, but mistook him for the gardener?*

Because she had present to her mind the image of Jesus suffering, bruised, and disfigured as it hung upon the cross, or was lying dead in the sepulchre, to which image the present appearance of her divine Lord bore very little resemblance.

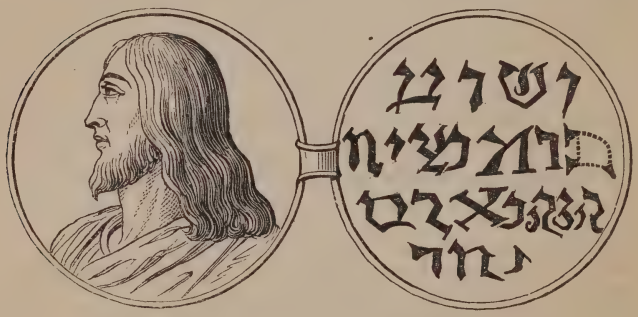
1137. Magdalene, in grief and tears, knew not Jesus at first; but no sooner does he address her than the well-known accents recall him at once to her mind. She

A.C. 33.—Portrait of Jesus Christ.

would now wish to kiss his feet, but he desires her first to go and bear the joyful message of his resurrection to his "brethren," *i. e.*, the disciples and Peter (Mark xvi. 7.) Calmet thus paraphrases the words of Jesus Christ to Magdalene :—"I will not leave you again; be not in a hurry to touch me ; you shall all have this pleasure; I will remain with you some time before my ascension. Announce my resurrection to the apostles."

1138. *Why should the profile portrait of our Saviour sent by Lentulus to Tiberias be regarded with respect as a highly probable likeness?*

Because, says the author of "The Truths of Religion



PORTRAIT OF JESUS CHRIST.

Demonstrated by an Appeal to Existing Monuments, "we think it by no means improbable that some of the early Jewish converts might be desirous to possess a memorial of their Lord in a medal which might bear an impress of his visage."

1139. "And that such medals d'd exist there can be but little doubt, though both Celsus and Origen were ignorant of them. In these remote periods, even in the paintings and sculptures of Thebes, much more in those of Greece and Rome, their statues and pictures were correct likenesses, and were multiplied without reserve. Besides these, there was another source which might supply such a medal, altogether irrespective of the early Christians. Scarcely an event occurred of great moment that was not commemorated on a coin or medal. So remarkable a history of events as those which occurred in Judea would not pass by, we may be sure, without some such commemoration. It is highly probable that the governor of Judea would send to Tiberias and the Roman senate a representation of the illustrious individual who was the Author of that "new religion" which, according to their own account, had "turned the world upside down." Copies of several medals are given in the work above referred to, all bearing a strong resemblance to each other, and on one of

A.C. 33.—The Disciples going to Emmaus.

which the word *Messias* appears. Of one of them the author remarks:—"It is interesting to consider this medal in connection with the celebrated letter of Lentulus to Tiberias, with which description it entirely corresponds. In rejecting documents such as these we may be guilty of an unwarrantable scepticism. *We do not see why this should not have been taken; but we see many reasons to believe that such a representation of our Saviour might have been copied.*"—(Ibid.)

Josephus, the Jewish historian and pharisee, gives the following account of our Lord's appearance and ministry:—"Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again on the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and many other wonderful things concerning him; and the sect of Christians so named from him is not extinct at this day."—("Antiquities," xviii. 3.)

1140. *Why did the chief priests give a large sum of money to the Roman guard to tell an absurd falsehood about the resurrection of Jesus?* (Matt. xxviii. 12, 13.)

Because they were reduced, through their own opposition to the truth, to a state of judicial blindness.

1141. St. Augustine, upon the passage, "And they gave large money to the soldiers, saying, Say ye *His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept*"—"O wretched craft! dost thou shut thy eyes against the light of prudence and piety, and plunge thyself so deep in cunning as to say this? Dost thou produce sleeping witnesses? Certainly thou thyself sleepest that failest in making a true search after such things."

The Jewish leaders were given over to believe a lie—and a lie too of their own making. The gospel adds:—"And this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." (Matt. xxviii. 15.)

1142. *Who was Cleopas (mentioned Luke xxiv.) as one of the disciples going to Emmaus, and to whom Jesus Christ appeared?*

He was a citizen of Emmaus; according to some, a brother of Joseph; to others, the husband of Mary sister to the blessed Virgin; and father of James the Less.

1143. His house was afterwards changed into a church. Both Latins and Greeks keep the festival of St. Cleopas. He was martyred by the Jews.—(Calmet.)

1144. *Why is it said, in connection with the breaking of*

bread, "and their eyes were opened and they knew him"? (Luke xxiv. 31.)

Because they received through the "bread"—understood to signify the holy sacrament—a spiritual enlightenment, or a power of discerning that to which naturally they were blind.—(Calmet.)

1145. That the "breaking of bread" meant simply partaking of a repast, is rendered impossible by the comment, supplied by the disciples themselves in Luke xxiv. 32, 33. "And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

"And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

"Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon.

"And they told what things were done in the way, and how *he was known of them in breaking of bread.*"

1146. *Why did Jesus Christ, after "breaking bread" with Cleopas and his companion, vanish out of their sight?*

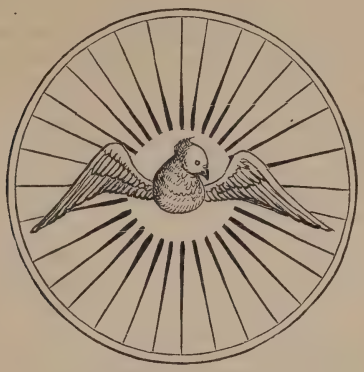
To show them that his glorified body was in no way subject to the laws of matter; that as God he was superior to them.

1147. For the same purpose Jesus Christ presented himself to the assembled apostles and disciples. They were terrified and affrighted because their minds had been wrought up to an extreme degree of sensibility. Their joy was of so intense a kind that it was closely allied to pain. He appeared "in the midst of them," but how? They saw no door opened or any aperture by which he could have *naturally* entered. Being doubtful whether they were looking upon a spectre or a real tangible person, Jesus, after breathing "Peace be unto you," showed them his wounded hands and feet. "And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered," to satisfy them that he was really their own beloved Jesus, he asks for food, sits down with them and partakes as of old.

1148. *Why was St. Thomas incredulous of the resurrection notwithstanding the united testimony of the apostles and disciples?*

Because he thought the event too great for belief; in ordinary language, too good to be true.

1149. The absence of Thomas from the first meeting of Christ with his apostles may have been permitted in order to bring about the additional evidence which was furnished when he was finally convinced.



CHAPTER X.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

PREFATORY NOTE.*

WITH the "Acts of the Apostles" the third part of the Sacred Scriptures may be said to commence; for whereas the Old Testament, or that portion which contains an account of the origin of the world, the work of creation, the giving of the law, and the history of the Jewish people, forms the first, and exhibits the work of the first person of the Divine Trinity—God the Father; the Gospels comprise the second part, or the work of Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity—God the Son; and are succeeded by the third, in the same way, so to speak, as the work of the Holy Ghost—the third Divine person—follows and completes those of the other two.

So apparent was this view to the ancient commentators and primitive Christians, that the book now called "The Acts of the Apostles," was formerly known as the Gospel of the Holy Ghost.

But, as in the Divine Trinity consisting of three persons, there is but one and the same God (see *Athanasian Creed* prefixed to "The Common Prayer"), and as all their respective attributes must necessarily harmonize, so the three portions of the sacred volume will be found to harmonize most perfectly. What is intended here is to point out wherein the difference exists between the spirit of the three main portions of the Bible thus divided.

Characteristic of the First Portion, or Old Testament.

This may be deduced from a consideration of that of God the Father as exhibited to us therein. Jehovah, in his relation to his creatures, is the God of

* The above illustration, as well as some of the phraseology used in the note, has been taken from Didron's *Iconographie Chretienne*, Bohn's Translation.

omnipotence and strength. In the sacred history he is constantly described as exerting the divine attribute of power. The historical facts narrated in the Old Testament, seem to be created by the breath of his will, and to unfold themselves under the power of his word. In the moral precepts of the ancient law, a spirit is heard, which is not that of love. "The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," says the Psalmist. "The *fear* of the Lord is a crown of wisdom," says Solomon. If, with the help of a concordance of the Old Testament, we were to seek out all those texts in which fear is extolled, or God declared to punish men by fear and terror, we should be almost terrified at their number. Everything is condensed into the terror which the name of Jehovah alone ought to inspire. "Holy and terrible is his name." (Psa. cxi. 9.)

Of the Second Portion, the Gospels.

There is a wide difference between the spirit of the Jewish religion, which makes us tremble before God like timid children before a severe father, and that of the Christian, every word of which breathes on man the caressing spirit of love. Between Jehovah and Jesus Christ stretches an entire world. The one employs the constrictive power of severity, the other the expansive agency of hope and love. The hand of the ancient law is upraised to punish the slightest fault; the new law is a mother weeping even while she reproves the errors of her children, and caressing while she reproaches them. "The Lord, let him be your fear, and let him be your dread," cried the prophet Isaiah (viii. 13). "Beloved, let us love one another," said the dying apostle, and in thus saying he repeated, perhaps for the thousandth time, the lesson he had learned when leaning on the heart of his divine Friend and Master. In fact, while Jehovah says, "Enter my house with fear," the whole moral teaching of Jesus is comprehended in the following words:—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." (Luke x. 27.)

Of the Third Portion, or the "Acts" and Remaining Books.

The power of the Father, softened towards his creatures by the interposition of the Son, joined to the love of the Son and his own attributes of wisdom and intelligence, form a sufficient argument why this part of the Sacred Scriptures should have been sometimes called the Gospel of the Holy Ghost. As the Holy Ghost is the spirit of wisdom and intelligence, we are led to expect its manifestations in perusing the books in question, and such is the result. The power and sovereignty of God—the right he has to our full and unreserved homage, is enforced by the apostles as the mouth-pieces of the Divinity.

The love of God for his creatures, shown in the vicarious sufferings of Christ for them, is held up and proved. The wisdom of God in providing the means of a universal redemption, and a sufficient application of those means to every variety of circumstance is pointed out. Finally, a guarantee is given that the completing work—the assimilation of man to the likeness of his offended Creator—shall be operated and continued to the end of time by the perpetual presidence of the Comforter—"the Paraclete, who shall abide with you for ever." (John xiv. 16—26.) The one characteristic, in short, of the third portion of the Bible, is the application of all that precedes it to the wants and necessities of man considered as a being responsible to God.

Contents of "The Acts."

To the Jews the use of the old law and ceremonial as leading up to the belief in Christ, and the necessity for the gospel events, are pointed out. To the Gentiles the new covenant is broadly exhibited and offered. It is a commentary upon the two former portions—and such a commentary as it is not possible, without calling in question the whole of inspiration, to gainsay.

1150. *Why was the book of the Acts of the Apostles written?*

Because it was of the utmost importance in the early times of the gospel, and certainly not of less importance to every subsequent age, to have an authentic account of the promised descent of the Holy Ghost and of the success which attended the first preachers of the gospel, both among the Jews and Gentiles.

1151. These great events completed the evidence of the divine mission of Christ, established the truth of the religion which he taught, and pointed out in the clearest manner the comprehensive nature of the redemption which he purchased with his death.

Œcumenius calls the "Acts" the "Gospel of the Holy Ghost;" and St. Chrysostom, the "Gospel of our Saviour's Resurrection." Here, in the lives and preaching of the apostles we have the most miraculous instances of the power of the Holy Ghost, and in the account of those who were the first believers the most excellent pattern of the true Christian life.

1152. *Why was the book of the "Acts of the Apostles" so called?*

Because it contained a record of the first establishment of the Christian Church by the apostles, or a brief account of some of those principal events or acts in which the leading apostles figured.

1153. This book in its very beginning professes itself to be a continuation of the gospel of St. Luke, and its style bespeaks it to be written by the same person. It is quoted as such by innumerable ancient authors, particularly by Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Irenæus, Tertullian, Eusebius, and St. Jerome. It comprehends a period of about thirty years, but it by no means contains a general history of the Church during that time. The principal facts recorded in it are, the choice of Matthias to be an apostle in the room of the traitor Judas; the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; the preachings, miracles, and sufferings of the apostles at Jerusalem; the death of Stephen the first martyr; the persecution and dispersion of the first Christians; the preaching of the gospel in different parts of Palestine, especially in Samaria; the conversion of St. Paul; the call of Cornelius the first gentile convert; the persecution of the Christians by Herod Agrippa; the mission of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles by the express command of the Holy Ghost;

the decree made at Jerusalem about circumcision; and the latter part of the book is confined to the history of St. Paul, of whom St. Luke was the constant companion for several years.

As this account of St. Paul is not continued beyond his two years imprisonment in Rome, it is probable that this book was written soon after his release, which happened in the year 63; we may, therefore, consider the Acts of the Apostle as composed about the year 64.

1154. *Why did our Saviour, after his resurrection, appear to a part of his disciples, and not to all of them?*

Because to many of them who did not know the mystery, he would have seemed a phantom. For if the disciples were diffident and terrified, and required to touch him with their hands, it is easy to imagine how others would have been affected.

1155. *What was meant by the baptism of the Holy Ghost?* (Acts i. 5.)

The being cleansed and sanctified by his plentiful graces.

1156. *Why did the apostles and disciples ask, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel"?*

Because up to this period they had failed to realize the truth that Christ's kingdom was a spiritual one, and not of this world, and their thoughts and hopes still lingered upon the restoration of the temporal sovereignty of Judea by Jesus.

1157. *Why did not our Lord undeceive his apostles upon this point?*

Because, evidently, the near approach of the enlightening spirit—the Holy Ghost—would suffice for all requirements.

1158. *Why, after Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven, "and a cloud received him out of their sight," did the two angels, or two men in white apparel, predict his reappearance in a similar manner?*

Because, in the opinion of many commentators, among whom are Sts. Chrysostom, Hilary, and Jerome, our Lord will summon the world to its last judgment by descending in a cloud upon mount Olivet.

1159. In other passages of the Scriptures (*e.g.*, Joel iii. 2, 12) we read that "The Lord will gather all nations *in the valley of Jehoshaphat*, and will plead with

them there." It is this valley that separates Jerusalem from the mount of Olivet, and herein is a most remarkable coincidence—the testimony of the old dispensation corresponding with that of the new, and investing the site of our Lord's ascension into heaven with an awful interest. If the Lord is to plead with the nations from Olivet, the nations must needs be in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

1160. *Why did the apostles and disciples remain quietly at Jerusalem after the ascension of our Lord into heaven?*

1. Because being still unconfirmed in their faith, and deficient of many requisites for the promulgation of the gospel of their Master, they preferred to remain in retirement and seclusion. 2. Because they had received a command from our Lord to tarry in the holy city until the promised COMFORTER, the Holy Ghost, should descend upon them, and which, they were led to expect, would happen in a very few days.

1161. The distance from mount Olivet to Jerusalem is said (Luke i. 12) to be a "Sabbath-day's journey," by which is meant that distance which was permitted by the Mosaic law to pedestrians on the Sabbath. Animals, beasts of burthen, being prohibited to be used upon that day, it was of necessity such an excursion as might be taken on foot. It was said to be in length one mile or 2000 cubits. The Syrian translator of the New Testament puts about seven stadia for a Sabbath-day's journey, which is, according to the computation of the Rabbins, about a mile.

1162. *Why did the Holy Ghost descend upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues?*

Because, by the symbol of a flame or tongue of fire, was signified the efficacy of the apostolic doctrine, enforced as it should be by zeal, eloquence, and a burning charity.

1563. The Hebrews use the word tongue for anything pointed. Thus they say a tongue of the earth for a promontory, a fiery tongue for a flame in shape of a tongue.

1164. *Why did the apostles consider it necessary to elect a successor to Judas Iscariot?*

1. Because they deemed it expedient to preserve the original constitution of the apostolic college, which consisted of twelve persons, each of whom should have been a witness of the sufferings, and in particular of *the resurrection* of Jesus. 2. They were moved thereto by a particular prophecy in Psalm lxix. 25, wherein the apostasy of Judas and the election of his successor were particularly pointed out.

1165. This passage we find alluded to and quoted by St. Peter as a sort of authority for the act in question—"For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and, his bishoprick let another take." (Acts i. 20.)

1166. *Why did the apostles draw lots in order to determine their choice of a successor to Judas Iscariot?*

Because that was the recognized method of appealing to God, who was believed by the result to signify his will.

1167. From the circumstance related in Acts i. 15, of St. Peter's taking the initiative in this election of a successor to Judas Iscariot, some commentators infer that he was already looked upon by the other apostles as their leader and president. A distinction had been made by our Lord in favour of this apostle when he said (Luke xxii. 32), "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," and the above act, joined to the circumstance that he preached the first sermon and reaped the first plenteous harvest of converts, seems to favour the idea.

1168. *Why did the apostles receive the gift of tongues?*

Because they were thus miraculously enabled to fulfil the precept of Jesus, and preach the gospel to *every* creature.

1169. Some suppose that the apostles spoke only their own tongue, and the miracle consisted in each one of their hearers understanding it as if they spoke it in his language. But others, such as St. Augustine, understand the text literally, though the apostles had not this gift on all occasions nor on all subjects, and therefore sometimes stood in need of interpreters.

1170. *Why did the Holy Ghost descend upon the apostles at the feast of Pentecost?*

1. Because, as that feast was the completion or end of the solemn paschal time, it was most appropriate as the commencing day of the Christian Church, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. 2. Because, under the old law, this was a feast of *the first-fruits*, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the first converts were now made. 3. Pentecost was one of the three great yearly festivals in which, under the Jewish law, all the males were required to appear before God at the place of his sanctuary.

1171. From this cause Jerusalem was full of visitors from every part of the then known globe, and thus the apostles had the best possible opportunity of declaring the truths of the gospel and spreading the faith—an opportunity of which they were enabled to avail themselves in a wonderful manner.

Proselytes.

1172. *Why was the great Pentecostal act, the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, ushered in by "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind"?*

Because this noise and wind were symbols of the Divinity.

1173. "Perhaps this was a kind of thunder, accompanied with a great wind, which filled with terror and awe the whole company, and disposed them to receive the gift of heaven with humility and fervour. It appears to have been heard over a great part of the city, and to have gathered together a great crowd, who came to learn the cause. It was thus, also, that formerly on mount Sinai thunder and lightning, the dark cloud and the smoking mountain, marked the majesty of God."—(Calmet.)

1174. *How many persons are supposed to have been present at this first miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost?*

The Scripture narrative says "about a hundred and twenty." This number was made up of the twelve apostles, the seventy disciples, and others who had been the chief witnesses of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection, or were intended to be the first missionaries of the faith.

1175. Mary the mother of Jesus is specially mentioned, and there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that she was regarded by the apostles and disciples as specially their mother—the one link between the seen and the unseen worlds.

When the apostles came to appoint the seven deacons, they ordered the assembly to look out among them men full of the Holy Ghost (Acts vi. 3), which plainly implies that there were several persons among them remarkable for such extraordinary gifts; yet we cannot suppose any time so proper for their reception of those gifts as this wonderful day of Pentecost. Nay, if the apostles themselves, by the imposition of their hands, could communicate the Holy Ghost to those whom they ordained ministers in particular churches, it seems unreasonable to think that such persons as had been constant companions of Christ and his apostles, and were to be the great preachers of the gospel in several parts of the world, should not at this time be endowed with the like gifts; so that we may, with St. Chrysostom and others, be allowed to infer that the Holy Ghost fell not only upon the apostles, but also upon the hundred and twenty that were in company with them.—(Whitby's "Annotations.")

1176. *Why are the proselytes particularly mentioned as among the assemblage at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost?* (Acts ii. 10.)

Because about that period the prophecy was fulfilled, which said, that the Gentiles should seek access to the Jewish church.

St. Peter's First Sermon.

1177. Proselytes were, at the foundation of Christianity, to be found in the chief cities of the world. The Jews themselves were greatly dispersed, carrying with them a knowledge of the true God, and in most cases a great zeal for proselytism. Very many heathens were brought within the Jewish pale. Thus the ground was prepared for the divine seed of Christianity when it should be scattered. A very great influx of these proselytes at this particular Pentecost was clearly the work of Providence, for of the thousands converted by St. Peter's first sermon, and baptized immediately after, doubtless a very great number, on returning to their own cities, became, in a lesser degree, apostolic messengers of peace and salvation to their fellow-countrymen.

Proselytes were of two kinds:—1. He who merely undertook to renounce idolatry and worship the true God, honouring him, and observing the precepts of Noah (par. 87), was called *gerseptoschab*, "a proselyte of the gate," a foreigner allowed to dwell among Hebrews, and to have access on days of public worship to the outer court of the temple; hence called the court of the Gentiles. 2. He who was circumcised and observed the laws of Moses was named *gersepzedek*, "a proselyte of righteousness," but did not cease to be regarded as a foreigner; for all were such who sprang not from the loins of Abraham. In his epistle to the Ephesians (ii. 19), St. Paul declares that all these distinctions have come to an end.

1178. *Why did St. Peter preach his first sermon?*

Because, in consequence of the report having spread that the disciples were speaking in various tongues, and in a most surprising manner, a concourse of people was brought together, and an explanation of the miracle demanded.

1179. The mockers, who could find a sufficient reason for the marvel in an attributed drunkenness*, seem to have been natives of Judea. The extreme improbability of the circumstance, namely, that the depressed and down-trodden followers of Jesus should, to the number of a hundred and twenty, so soon exhibit themselves as the subjects of inebriety was no difficulty with these. There are no people so credulous as the unbelieving.

1180. *Why did St. Peter and St. John continue to go up into the Jewish temple at the hour of prayer?* (Acts iii. 1.)

Because as yet the ceremonial law was not abolished, nor its injunctions forbidden to be followed by the converts.

1181. This abolition was to be gradual, and would necessarily result with the progress of the Christian Church. But at first the temple, and especially the synagogue worship was to be used at the discretion of the neophytes.

* "Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine." (Acts ii 13.)

A.C. 33.—The Lame Man Cured by Peter and John.

1182. *What was the first form of worship adopted by the Apostles?*

We learn from Acts ii. 42, that this chiefly consisted of the breaking of bread and of prayer.

1183. The *form* was, in the beginning, a modification of the synagogue worship. After the exclusion of the apostles from the synagogues, they assembled (at nightfall, principally) in the house of some Christian, which was lighted for the purpose with lamps (Acts xx. 8). The apostles, with the elders, when engaged in public worship, took a position where they would be most likely to be heard by all. The first act was merely a salutation or blessing, "The Lord be with you," or "Peace be with you." Then followed the doxologies and prelections, the same as in the synagogues. A discourse followed. Prayer, the Lord's Supper, and a collection for the poorer members of the flock concluded the meetings.—(Jahn.)

1184. *Why did the apostles Peter and John heal the lame man?* (Acts iii. 7.)

Because, having asked an alms of them, which their poverty precluded their bestowing upon him, they took occasion to exercise on his behalf the merciful powers of their ministry, healing him in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

1185. *Why did the apostles invoke Jesus "of Nazareth," when our Lord was really of Bethlehem?*

Because he was better known to the people of Judea under that appellation than by any other.

1186. *Why did St. Peter hereupon preach his second sermon?*

This was the hour of prayer, and it may appear remarkable that the apostle should risk a general interruption of the service by preaching; but a concourse of people had been drawn together by the miracle worked upon the lame man, and to these, in answer to their interrogations, the sermon was addressed.

1187. *Why did the rulers of the Jews imprison Peter and John?*

They affected to have some proper doubts as to the spirit under which the apostles acted in curing the lame man.

1188. "They wished to know, by examining them, by what power they had done this miracle—whether it was a true miracle, or done by the power of magic or enchantment. The cognizance of this kind of affairs belonged to them. It was their duty to repress the attempts of false prophets, seducers, and magicians."—(Calmet.)

A.C. 33.—First Persecution of the Church.

The principal agents, however, in this first imprisonment of the apostles were the Sadducees, who, as opponents of the doctrine of a future life, were hurt by their preaching the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1189. *Why is the "boldness" of Peter and John specially remarked upon by the evangelist John?*

Because it was a noteworthy circumstance, as illustrating an effect of the pentecostal gifts.

1190. The conduct of St. Peter in the hall of Caiaphas, when his master was upon his trial, and the conduct of the same apostle after he had received the plenitude of the pentecostal gifts, cannot escape notice.

In the hall he is so timid and fearful, that when charged by a mere female domestic with being a disciple, he forgets all, even his Divine Master's actual presence and recent warnings, and protests that he knows him not. While he incurs no greater risk than that of being thought one of his followers, he is overpowered with alarm, and seeks to secure his personal safety at the expense of truth and charity. But a few weeks afterwards he appears again in the presence of the same Caiaphas. On the former occasion his principal care was to elude danger by passing himself off as not belonging to Christ; now, arraigned before the tribunal of that cruel and iniquitous judge, as the head and leader of the *new sect*, he is altogether another man. He appears without fear. He addresses the court in words which show that concern for himself was no longer what it had been, a governing principle; but that, on the contrary, he was now as fearless in asserting himself to be a preacher of the new religion, as he had once been fearful of appearing a mere disciple.

The city of Jerusalem, from one end to the other, is in an uproar. The boldness of the apostles in propagating the religion of one who had been put to death by sentence of the civil power must be curbed and punished. Already the conversions from the old religion numbered "about five thousand men," and the number of women, if then as they are usually found to be, was, probably, very much greater in proportion. Penalties must be had recourse to, to put a stop to a state of things which was destroying the ancient religion of the country, working havoc in every direction, dividing husbands from their wives, parents from their children, and uprooting society as hitherto constituted from its very foundation. The author of all this had been put to death upon the cross. His followers, led by Peter and John, now braved them at the very gate of the temple, preaching "through Jesus the resurrection of the dead."

1191. *Why were the apostles dismissed without punishment?*

Because the council stood in awe of the vast multitude which followed them and believed their doctrine.

1192. They therefore contented themselves with threatening them. Here commences the history of the first persecution of religious opinion, which the passions of men have continued and swelled to such a frightful length. But on this, as on all other occasions, it has defeated its own purpose by adding firmness and constancy to the persecuted. Truth is not to be overpowered by violence. When will men learn that charity and kindness is the principle of conversion?

A.C. 33.—Gamaliel's Tolerant Advice.

1193. *Why was St. Barnabas so named?*

Because he was the first of the disciples who set the example of a community of goods, selling his possessions, and laying the proceeds at the feet of the apostles.

1194. This disciple was named Joseph, or Joses. The surname of Barnabas—signifying the son of consolation—was bestowed upon him by the apostles to commemorate his charity.

According to oriental usage, when any present or offering is made to a superior, spiritual guide, or distinguished scholar, it is not placed in his hands, but laid at his feet. It is called "the feet-offering." Ananias and Sapphira brought a part of the price of the land they had sold, "and laid it at the apostle's feet."

1195. *Why was so severe a punishment inflicted upon Ananias and Sapphira?* (Acts v.)

Because the intrusion into the infant church of such hideous vices as hypocrisy and avarice called for a most signal rebuke.

1196. Ananias and his wife had made a promise, or vow, to put into the common stock the price of what they had to sell. When they had sold the field they resolved by mutual consent to keep for their private use part of the money, and to bring in the rest as if they had received no more. The whole price being promised, and by that means consecrated to God, St. Augustine calls it a *sacrilegious fraud*, and St. Chrysostom, *a theft* of what was already made sacred to God. St. Augustine adds:—"I can believe that God spared them after this life, for his mercy is great. They were stricken with the scourge of death, that they might not be subject to eternal punishment."—(St. Augustine, Serm. 148.)

1197. *Why did the apostles use "Solomon's porch" as a place of meeting?* (Acts v. 12.)

Because this was outside the temple, a large place, open to all, Jews and Gentiles, pure and impure.

1198. They could here readily speak to large multitudes, and were not liable to be interfered with by the priests; who, had they been within the temple, would frequently have interrupted them, and soon have put them to silence.—(Calmet.)

1199. *Who was Gamaliel?* (Acts v. 32.)

He was a Jew, an influential member of the Sanhedrim; some suppose secretly a Christian, but who used his power in favour of a tolerant policy, and as such is most worthy to be remembered.

1200. Gamaliel's advice to the Jews furnishes the best possible example of political wisdom in regard to religious matters. "Let them alone, for if this counsel, or this work, be of men it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye

cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." Gamaliel was the master of St. Paul, Barnabas, Stephen, and others. He afterwards publicly professed the Christian faith.

1201. *Why were the seven deacons appointed?* (Acts vi.)

Because the increasing work of the apostles rendered it necessary that they should be relieved from a superintendence of the temporal affairs of the Church.

1202. The apostles did not judge it proper for them to be so much employed in managing the common stock, out of which every one as he stood in need was supplied, as to meat and other necessaries. This is what is meant by the words, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables." (Acts vi. 2.) Accordingly Stephen and the other deacons were placed over these matters, the apostles giving themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

1203. *Who was St. Stephen?*

He was probably one of the Hellenistical Jews that believed.

1204. Epiphanius thinks he was of the number of the seventy disciples; but these were appointed to teach and preach: whereas it seems that Stephen and his brother deacons had not that particular designation, but were chosen "to serve tables."—(Calmet.)

The above opinion from Calmet seems to be contradicted by the text, which shows how grandly and movingly Stephen could preach. His sermon is a model of eloquence.

1205. *Why was St. Stephen put to death?*

Because his great merits and powerful advocacy of the gospel doctrine drove the Jewish leaders into a momentary insanity of rage, under the influence of which, and against every form of law or justice, they stoned him.

1206. The proto-martyr of Christianity was gifted with extraordinary powers. His miracles, although not specifically recorded, were of a resistless kind. Added to which his exalted character was such that it communicated itself to his countenance—"Looking steadfastly upon him they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel" (Acts vi. 15). This miracle of a luminous countenance is recorded of only two other persons in the Scriptures: of Moses, after his return from the mount of God; and of Jesus Christ at his transfiguration.

The martyrdom of St. Stephen is particularly noteworthy, as introducing the future Apostle of the Gentiles. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, *whose name was Saul.*"

1207. *Who was St. Paul?*

He was the last chosen of the apostles, but as an evangelist, or preacher of the gospel, the most eminent of them all.

Character of St. Paul.

The history of St. Paul is readily collected from the sacred text; its leading particulars are here recapitulated. He was an Israelite, of the tribe of Benjamin, born in Tarsus, of parents who are thought to have been opulent. That he was taught a trade was due to the custom by which every Jew was bound. St. Paul's father enjoyed the right of Roman citizenship, but whether he acquired it by some act of utility to Rome, or inherited it from an ancestor, is not known. The apostle had a sister and a nephew; he mentions other kinsmen in Rom. xvi. 11, 13, 21 ("Salute Herodion my kinsman; Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and *his* mother and *mine;* Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you").

The first elements of his education were received in his native city, but as he was intended for a Rabbi, he was at an early age sent to Jerusalem and put under the care of Gamaliel. He proved a successful scholar of his master, being of an ardent natural temperament, eager for knowledge, pressing forward to gain distinction, spurning all half measures and compromises, seizing the principles of the Pharisees in all their comprehensiveness, and bold to carry them out into every possible application.

The history of this apostle's labours forms the chief subject of the narrative portion of the "Acts." St. Paul remained unmarried, and from his frequent commendations of the state of celibacy, he appears to have thought it preferable for the condition of an apostle.

ST. PAUL.

1208. *What were the characteristics of St. Paul's personal appearance?**

He is represented as a man of low stature, and inclining to stoop; of a grave countenance and a fair complexion.

1209. St. Chrysostom contrasting the low stature of St. Paul with the grandeur of his eloquence, says:—"This man of three cubits in height, was tall enough to touch the heavens." Lucian, in his satires, ridicules the personal appearance of the apostle as the "high-nosed, bald-pated Galilean." From his frequent allusions to his "infirmities" (Gal. iv. 13), it has been conjectured that his constitution was weak. St. Jerome says that he was afflicted with a constant headache. Others mention his weak eyes and defective utterance. If these latter were natural afflictions they

* The portrait here annexed must be taken as rather an ideal, than an actual one. Very few, if any, actual portraits of the first founders of Christianity exist.

must have been greatly overcome, since he was beyond all dispute one of the most perfect masters of elocution that the world ever saw. Longinus reckons him among the greatest orators of antiquity; and at Lystra he was regarded by the enthusiastic pagans as Mercury, the tutelar god of eloquence. (Acts xiv. 12.)

1210. *Why was St. Paul, although a Pharisee and belonging to the opulent classes of the Hebrews, said to be a tent-maker?*

Because it was a practice with the Jews, even of the best educated and wealthier ranks, to teach their children some trade.

1211. The tent-making of this apostle has been held by some modern writers to have been a making, or weaving of tent-cloth; St. Paul being a Cilician, a country which produced a species of rough-haired goats, from which the Cilicians manufactured a thick and coarse cloth much used for tents. The Fathers, however, say that he made military tents, the material of which was skins. This view throws some light upon the apostle's intimate acquaintance with military manners and equipage, references to which are so frequent in his epistles.

1212. *Why did Saul, afterwards Paul, persecute the Christians with such excessive hatred?*

Because of the natural vehemence of his character and of his entire devotion to the Jewish ceremonial and worship.

1213. In Gal. i. 13, 14, St. Paul thus expresses his position at that time:—"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it.

"And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."

1214. *How was St. Paul converted?*

Being upon a journey to Damascus, with authoritative letters from the chief priests to arrest any Christians whom he might find there, he was miraculously stopped by a voice from heaven, and struck blind and helpless to the ground.

1215. St. Luke says:—"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest.

"And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

"And as he journeyed he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.

"And he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?

A.C. 34—37.—The Crime of Simon Magus.

"And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

"And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord what will thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." (Acts ix. 1—6.)

1216. *Why is the appellation "Saul of Tarsus" significant?*

Because it informs us of the superior character of St. Paul as a scholar previous to his conversion; Tarsus being then the most celebrated seat of science and polite learning, and in this respect surpassing Athens and Alexandria.

1217. *How long was St. Paul in retirement after his baptism, and previous to the commencement of his apostleship?*

The phrase "many days" (Acts ix. 23), is explained in Gal. i. 17, 18, to signify about three years.

1218. "Neither went I up to Jerusalem . . .; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter." St. Paul made this retirement a means of preparation for the great work to which he had been called.

1219. *Why is the crime of "simony" derived from Simon Magus?*

Because that magician offered money to the apostles in order to induce them to bestow upon him the supernatural powers of the apostleship; and the purchase of ecclesiastical faculties has ever been held as profane and sacrilegious.

1220. *Why was Philip the deacon, after he had baptized the eunuch, caught up by the Spirit of the Lord and carried to Azotus?*

Because it was necessary that he should be transferred to the scene of his regular ministrations at once, which, according to the natural order of things could not be.

1221. This is one of those miraculous events which are occasionally overlooked by readers; yet it is not less clear than wonderful, that the deacon, after baptizing the Ethiopian officer, was conveyed by the hand of God over the large space of country that intervened between Gaza and Cæsarea.

1222. *Who was Dorcas, or Tabitha, whom St. Peter restored to life?* (Acts ix. 40.)

She was a pious woman of Joppa, who with others, widows

like herself, had formed a charitable association for alms-deeds and good works. (Acts ix. 36.)

1223. *Why was Cornelius the centurion, although not even a professor of Judaism, called "a devout man and one that feared God"?* (Acts x. 2.)

Because he was in what is termed "good faith," *i.e.*, he was a worshipper of God according to the light he had, and with a just intention.

1224. Cornelius religiously observed the law of nature, and the principal points of the Jewish moral law, though he did not profess Judaism.—(Calmet.)

God was so well pleased with the pure intention of Cornelius, that he vouchsafed to work several miracles as means to his conversion. He himself has visions; St. Peter has them also; and the Holy Ghost assists personally at their reception into the Christian fold.—(Brown.)

1225. *Why did disputes occur upon the reception of Cornelius into the Church?*

Because the ceremony of circumcision was dispensed with in his case, St. Peter deeming it unnecessary for Christians.

1226. This matter was fully discussed a little later, and authoritatively settled by what is known as the first council of Jerusalem.

1227. *By what name were the followers of Christ generally known previously to their taking the name of Christians?*

They had been called *Nazarenes, Galileans*, and *disciples of Jesus.*

1228. This honourable name of Christians, first bestowed at Antioch (Acts xi. 26), distinguished them from Jews and Gentiles, and from all heretical sects who were mostly known by the name of their founders.

1229. *Why is the famine predicted by Agabus, the Christian prophet* (Acts xi. 28), *remarkable?*

Because it was one of the events which, according to the warning prediction of our Lord, was to precede the formal destruction of Jerusalem.*

1230. In the reign of Claudius there were four seasons of famine; that alluded to in the above passage took place during the procuratorship of Fadus, A.C. 45, and continued under his successor, Tiberius. The Jews suffered greatly from its effects.—(Josephus, Antiq. xx. i. 1, 2.)

* "And there shall be famines and pestilences . . . in divers places."—(Matt. xxiv.)

A.C. 44.—Herod smitten with Death.

1231. *Why were the collections required to be made for the poor Christians in Judea?* (Acts xi. 29.)

1. On account of the famine. 2. Most of the Christians in Jerusalem had generously sold their possessions, and placed the price in the hands of the apostles; and many who had not voluntarily relinquished their property had probably lost most of it in the persecutions. Hence arose the particular distress of the brethren in Jerusalem, to relieve which the Gentiles made collections.

1232. *Why was Herod* (*Agrippa I.*) *eaten of worms?*

Because of his blasphemous acceptance of the flattery of the Jews, who hailed him as a god.

1233. This Herod was the son of Aristobulus and Mariamne, and grandson of Herod the Great. He had been educated at Rome, and on account of certain services rendered to Claudius, was by him appointed to the government of Judea and the kingdom of Chalcis, which had been possessed by Herod his brother. Thus Agrippa became one of the greatest princes of the East. To ingratiate himself with the Jews, he put to death the apostle St. James, and cast St. Peter into prison with the same design. By a miraculous interposition the latter was rescued from his hands. At Cæsarea he had games instituted in honour of Claudius. Here the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon waited on him to sue for peace. Herod, being come early in the morning into the theatre with a design to give them an audience, seated himself upon a throne dressed in a robe of silver tissue, worked in the most admirable manner. The rays of the morning's sun gave it such a dazzling appearance, that when the king began his speech to the Tyrians and Sidonians, the parasites around him exclaimed, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." Instead of rejecting these impious flatteries, Herod received them with an air of complacency; and the angel of the Lord smote him, because he did not give God the glory. Being, therefore, carried home to his palace, he died at the end of five days, racked with tormenting pains in his bowels, and devoured with worms. This was in A.D. 44. Herod had reigned seven years; he left a son of the same name, and three daughters—Berenice, who was married to her uncle Herod, her father's brother; Mariamne, and Drusilla.

1234. *Why is it written* (Acts xiii. 2), "*The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*"?

Because, although ministers were to be called to their work by the Holy Ghost, they were to be separated from the rest of men by some human means or ceremonies.

1235. This the following verse shows:—"And when *they* had fasted, and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, *they* sent them away." This human agency, being the

A.C. 44.—Elymas Struck with Blindness.

result of a divine direction, is to be considered as done by God himself. "So they, being sent forth *by the Holy Ghost*, departed into Seleucia, and from thence sailed to Cyprus." (Acts xiii. 4.)

1236. *Why is St. Paul's visit to Cyprus interesting?* (Acts xiii. 7.)

1. On account of the conversion of Sergius Paulus, its Roman pro-consul. 2. On account of the change which there took place in the name of the great apostle, who was henceforth called Paul.

1237. *Why was the name of Saul exchanged for that of Paul?*

There are two opinions upon this subject. The first is, that the letter P was substituted for the S, in accommodation to the Roman sense of elegance. The second is, that the apostle assumed the name of Paul in compliment to Sergius Paulus, his illustrious convert.

1238. St. Luke's narrative of the visit to Cyprus receives a collateral proof of its exact truthfulness from Roman history. Under the republic, Cyprus had been governed by a pro-prætor, not by a pro-consul. But under Augustus the status of that island was raised from a prætorian to a consular or senatorial province; and under the first emperors it was governed by pro-consuls. This is proved by coins of the period.

1239. *Why is Elymas the sorcerer, or Bar-jesus, said to have been with Sergius Paulus the governor?*

In all probability the latter, although a heathen, was in some degree impressed with the necessity of a belief in the true God, and associated much with the Jews, who were very numerous at Cyprus, and with Elymas, as one of the most astute among them.

1240. *Why was Elymas, the sorcerer, struck with blindness?*

Because he opposed himself to the work of the apostles in Cyprus, and particularly to the conversion of Sergius Paulus.

1241. The subsequent conversion of the proconsul leads us to infer that he was in good faith seeking for a knowledge of the truth. No sooner does he learn that the apostles are preaching through the island than he desires "to hear the word of God" (Acts xiii. 7). Elymas, on the contrary, neither loved the truth himself nor desired that his patron Sergius should embrace it. To the old enmity of a bigotted

Jew he added the virulence of a false prophet, "A child of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness" (Acts xiii. 10); and accordingly he set himself to withstand the apostles, "seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."

1242. *Why was the blindness inflicted upon Elymas said to be for a season?*

Because its object was the conversion of the pro-consul rather than the punishment of the false prophet.

1243. *Why did Paul and Barnabas, at the synagogue of Antioch, wait to be bidden before preaching to the people?*

Because this being the first occasion which the former took to address his countrymen publicly, St. Paul was anxious in all respects to conciliate them by a rigid observance of their routine.

1244. The practice was, when the reader had done, if he wished to preach or exhort, or to follow up his reading by a commentary, for him to approach the desk or pulpit and sit down; this the two apostles seem to have done, and moved probably by the spirit of God, the rulers of the synagogue perceived their wish to address the assembly, and requested them to do so. If the Jews on this occasion failed to benefit by the sermon, and allowed its fruit to be gathered by their Gentile neighbours, the fault was their own.—(Brown.)

1245. *Why is St. Paul's first sermon at Antioch* (Acts xiii. 14—41) *especially remarkable?*

1. Because of the circumstances accompanying its delivery. 2. Of its transcendent beauty, exhibiting as it does, in very few words, an epitome of God's dealings with the Jewish people, from the time of their departure from Egypt down to the moment when it was addressed to his hearers by the apostle.

1246. The Jews, however, seem to have been very little affected by it. Its results, as far as the Gentiles were concerned, were great and glorious. In Acts xiii. 42, it is stated, "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath."

* * * * * * *

"And the next Sabbath-day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

"But when the Jews saw the multitudes they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

A.C. 46.—The Apostles at Lystra.

"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

"And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."

1247. *Why did Saints' Paul and Barnabas depart from Antioch?*

Because of the persecution raised through the intrigues of the Jews with the chief men of the city.

1248. The apostles did not deem it prudent to remain in the face of this opposition; and accordingly, following the directions laid down by our Saviour (John xvi. 22), *they shook off the dust from their feet* and went to Iconium, a town of Asia Minor, the capital of Lycaonia. Here a great multitude of souls, both Jews and Greeks, were converted.

1249. *Why did the apostles go to Lystra?*

Because the unbelieving portion of the Jews of Iconium raised a tumult similar to that at Antioch, and drove them from the town.

1250. Our Lord had commanded them, "when they persecute you in one city flee to another." They therefore departed from Iconium, and came to the above-named city, which was also in Lycaonia.

1251. *Why did the people of Lystra attempt to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas as to gods?*

Because of the miracle which the apostles wrought upon the person of the impotent man, "a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked," and whom they restored in the name of Jesus to perfect soundness.

1252. The enraptured people wished to pay divine honours to St. Paul and St. Barnabas, regarding the latter as Jupiter, and his brother apostle as Mercury, "because he was the chief speaker." These honours were of course rejected with horror and aversion, St. Paul, taking occasion to proclaim the necessity of a true faith in the one only supreme God, and the folly of idolatry. The mistake of the Lystrans is worthy of a passing reflection. We hereby get a glimpse of the relative appearances of the two apostles. St. Barnabas was a fine and imposing looking man; on which account the heathens considered him a proper representative of Jupiter, the principal deity of their fabulous pantheon. St. Paul was the fluent and eloquent speaker. He was therefore Mercury, the companion and attendant of Jupiter.

A.C. 51—53.—The First Council of Jerusalem.

1253. *Why did the people of Lystra stone Saints Paul and Barnabas?*

Because certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, dogging the steps of the apostles, incited them to do so.

1254. Here a miracle was worked by the hand of God in favour of the great apostle. St. Paul had been stoned, dragged to the gates of Lystra, and left for dead. But as the disciples stood round about weeping and lamenting for their beloved father, "he rose up" apparently unhurt, "and entered the city—and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe." In order also to show to the unbelieving Jews how utterly futile was their miserable opposition to the spread of the apostolic doctrine, St. Paul, after visiting the adjacent cities, "returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

1255. *Why did Saints Paul and Barnabas go up to Jerusalem?* (Acts xv.)

Because of certain disputes raised by the half-converted Jews touching circumcision, and to determine which a council of the apostles was required.

1256. It was the purpose of the new law to supersede and gradually to abolish the old. But the spirit of the gospel was one of gentleness and condescension. Hence the converts from Judaism were indulged with the permission to continue many of the practices to which they had been accustomed. Among these was circumcision. Some of the Hebrews, not content with this permission, wished to impose the rite upon their Gentile brethren; disputes upon this point then arose, and an authoritative interference by the apostolic college was rendered necessary.

1257. *Why at this first council of Jerusalem did "Peter rise up and speak" first?*

Because he was regarded as the most venerable, and sat as a kind of president.

1258. *Why was the rite of circumcision declared unnecessary for the Gentile converts?*

Because it had been intended as a distinguishing mark between the Jew and the Gentile; and the necessity for such a distinction now no longer existed, since the gospel was preached equally to both.

A.C. 53.—The Church in Lydia's House.

1259. *Why were the Gentile converts desired to keep themselves from meat offered to idols, from things strangled, and from blood?*

Because, although the use of these things might be indifferent in themselves, their abstinence from them would induce the Jews the more readily to admit the society of the Gentiles, and it would be a means to exercise the latter in obedience.

1260. But this obligation was but temporary, and after the first ages was abrogated throughout the whole Western Church.

1261. *Why did St. Paul impose the rite of circumcision upon Timothy, whose father was a Gentile?*

Because the apostle wished his pupil to be equally acceptable to both Jews and Greeks.

1262. *Why after preaching and confirming the disciples in Phrygia and Galatia, did the Holy Ghost forbid the apostles Paul and Silas to continue longer in Asia?*

Because it was the purpose of God to send them into Europe, in order to introduce the faith there.

1263. Accordingly, coming to Troas, "A vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, 'Come over into Macedonia, and help us.' And after he had seen the vision (Paul and Silas) assuredly gathering that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel unto the Macedonians."

They set out from Troas, pass by Samothracia, and the next day came to Neapolis. "And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony, and they were in that city abiding certain days." (Acts. xvi. 9—12.)

1264. *Why are the apostles at Philippi represented as meeting the Jewish people without the city by a river-side?* (Acts xvi. 13.)

Because the Jews when residing in foreign countries generally erected their synagogues near running water for the convenience of ablutions.

1265. *Who was Lydia?* (Acts xvi. 14, 15.)

She was a dealer in purple, or in vests dyed purple, the disposal of which formed the staple trade of Philippi, a city of Macedonia.

1266. Lydia was a native of Thyatira, a proselyte to the Jewish religion, who, upon the preaching of St. Paul, became a zealous convert to the Christian faith. In

A.C. 53.—Nature of the Roman Prisons.

the places where, owing to the smallness of their number, or the intolerance of the magistrates, the Jews had no synagogue, they were accustomed to meet together for worship without the gates of the city, beneath the roof sometimes of a private house, or in the open air beneath the shade of a tree, or near the margin of a river. It was in one of these assemblies that Lydia heard the apostles preach, and to whom she offered hospitality. Her offer was pressed with such fervour that St. Paul was constrained to accept it, and hence the house of Lydia became the first Christian church of Philippi.

1267. *What were the causes of the persecutions at Philippi?* (Acts xvi. 16.)

The apostles having been accosted by a young girl who was possessed by an evil spirit, which declared openly through her the divine mission of St. Paul, they exorcised the demon and thus embittered her employers, who had been in the receipt of great sums through her powers of divination.

1268. St. Paul and Silas brought themselves into great trouble by the performance of their duty upon this occasion; but herein they followed to the letter the precepts of Jesus Christ, who would never permit the demons to testify to his divinity.

1269. *Why, after scourging the apostles and thrusting them into prison, did the magistrates of Philippi entreat them to depart in freedom?*

Because of the great terror which fell upon the Philippians on account of the earthquake which the prayers of Paul and Silas had evoked.

1270. *What was the nature of the prisons into which the apostles and first Christians were cast?*

This will be understood by a consideration of the following details which are extracted from the Martyrologies.

1271. The state prison was arranged on one and the same plan throughout the Roman empire—in other words, throughout the ancient world. It was commonly attached to the government buildings, and consisted of two parts. The first was the vestibule, or outward prison, which was a hall approached from the prætorium, and surrounded by cells opening into it. The prisoners who were confined in these had the benefit of *the air and light which the hall admitted.* Such was the place of confinement allotted to St. Paul at Cæsarea, which is said to be "Herod's judgment-hall."

From the vestibule there was a passage into the interior prison, called *robur* or the stocks, from the beams of wood, which were the instruments of confinement, or from the character of its floor. *It had no window or outlet except this door,* which, when closed, absolutely shut out light and air. Air, indeed, and coolness might be

obtained by the *barathrum* presently to be spoken of, but of what nature will then be seen. This apartment, called the stocks, was the place into which St. Paul and Silas were cast at Philippi before it was known that they were Romans. After scourging them severely, the magistrates, who nevertheless were but the local authorities, and had no proper jurisdiction in criminal cases, "cast them into prison charging the jailer to keep them safely; who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." (Acts xvi. 23, 34.)

The utter darkness, the heat, and the stench of this miserable place, in which the inmates were confined day and night, is often dwelt upon by the martyrs and their biographers. "After a few days we were taken to the prison, and I was frightened, for I had never known such darkness. O bitter day! the heat was excessive by reason of the crowd there." "We were not frightened at the foul darkness of that place; for soon that murky prison was radiant with the brightness of the Spirit. What days, what nights we passed there no words can describe. The torments of that prison no statement can equal." Such are a few of the expressions scattered over the Martyrologies.

Yet there was a place of confinement even worse than this. *In the floor of the inner prison* was a sort of trap-door, or hole, opening into the *barathrum** or pit, and called, from the original at Rome, the Tullianum. Sometimes prisoners were confined here: sometimes despatched by being cast headlong into it through the opening. It was into such a pit as this that the prophet Jeremiah was put by Zedekiah the king. "Then they took Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, *that was in the court of the prison:* and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire." (Jer. xxxviii. 6.)

1272. *Why were the Bereans commended as more noble than those of Thessalonica in that they searched the Scriptures?* (Acts xvii. 11.)

St. Paul had, according to his ordinary custom, been exhorting the Jews of those parts out of the Scripture prophecies, proving from them that Jesus was the Messiah. Upon which the Thessalonian Jews raised a tumult, while those of Berea betook themselves to the perusal of the prophetical writings, thereby testing the accuracy of the apostle's references.

1273. When the latter addressed their countrymen they almost invariably appealed to these writings, which was not the case when they preached to the Gentiles, to whom, of course, the Jewish Scriptures were little known. The result in the case of the Bereans was, that "many of them believed; also of honourable women, which were Greeks, and of men not a few."

* Barathrum, from *barathron*, a deep pit at Athens into which criminals were cast. Besides being a kind of *cesspool* for the prison, its sides were sometimes furnished with hooks and knives which wounded the bodies of the victims as they descended.

A.C. 54—56.—The Altar to the "Unknown God."

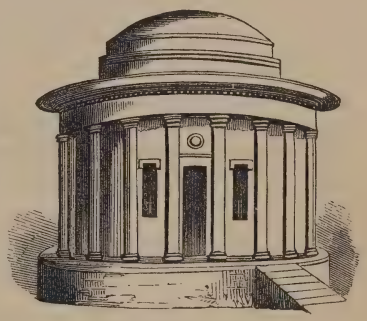
1274. *What was the Areopagus?* (Acts xvii. 19.)

It was the supreme and most famous tribunal of all Greece, before which all important causes were tried.

1275. The persons who composed it were much renowned for their wisdom. Cicero, and many other Romans, were ambitious of the honour of being an Areopagite; but the power of Athens being now much diminished, this court had sunk in importance, and was, in St. Paul's time, little more than the shadow of a great name.—(Calmet.)

1276. *Why did the Athenians set up an altar to an "Unknown God"?*

They were, in the words of Scripture, "too superstitious," and set it up lest, among the hundreds of altars erected in various parts of the city to all the idols *of whom they had heard*, they should have omitted to honour some one *unknown to them by name*, but of whom they stood in dread.



VOTIVE TEMPLE, ATHENS.

1277. *What were the Epicurean and Stoic philosophies?* (Acts xvii. 18.)

The former of these was very much the same as that of the modern deists. Its followers held that the Almighty did not interfere by his providence in the government of the world; that the soul did not subsist after the body; and consequently that there was no future state of retribution. The latter denied that man had liberty of action, and maintained that all things happened by destiny and fatal necessity.

1278. *Who was Dionysius the Areopagite?*

He was the most illustrious of the converts made by St. Paul at Athens.

1279. He became Bishop of Athens, and was the same person who, according to Estius, had, upon observing the remarkable convulsions of nature coincident with the

A.C. 54—56.—St. Paul works as a Tent-maker.

death of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and not knowing the cause, exclaimed, "Either the universe is falling to ruin, or the God of Nature must be suffering."

1280. *Who were Aquila and Priscilla?* (Acts xviii. 2.)

They were of the Jewish nation, converts to Christianity, and, previously to the date of the events mentioned in the above text, residents of Rome. Aquila is stated to have been a native of Pontus. By an edict, A.C. 52, the Emperor Claudius banished all Jews from the imperial city. Aquila and his wife Priscilla then went to Corinth, and there entertained St. Paul.

1281. They appear to have been zealous promoters of the Christian cause. St. Paul, in Rom. xvi. 3, 4, intimates that they had exposed themselves to imminent danger on his account. They are mentioned also with expressions of esteem in 2 Tim. iv. 19. Aquila and Priscilla followed the same profession—that of tent-making—as St. Paul, and probably employed many workmen.

1282. *Why did St. Paul, while at Corinth at the house of Aquila, work as a tent-maker?* (Acts xviii. 3.)

Because he wished to give a proof to his fellow-countrymen, the Jews, of his perfect disinterestedness, and that he did not wish to be a burden to those to whom he preached the gospel.

1283. *Who was Gallio, the deputy of Achaia, before whom the unbelieving Jews of Corinth brought St. Paul?* (Acts xviii. 12.)

He was a man of very superior attainments, a kind of Stoic philosopher, and brother to the celebrated Seneca, Nero's preceptor.

1284. St. Paul and Seneca were known to each other, and maintained a brief correspondence. The letters that passed between them are, however, not now extant.

1285. *Who was Apollos?* (Acts xviii. 23.)

He was a Jew of Alexandria, an eloquent man, and deeply read in the Old Testament books, which is the meaning of the expression, "one mighty in the Scriptures."

1286. He had received the baptism of John only, had not heard the apostles preach, nor received the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands; yet he preached boldly to the Jews, demonstrating from the Mosaical and other prophetical writings that Jesus must needs be the Messiah. He went to Ephesus in the year A.C. 54, during the absence of St. Paul, who had gone to Jerusalem. It was while

A.C. 54—56.—"Diana of the Ephesians."

preaching in the synagogue of the Jews at Corinth, that he was first seen by Aquila and Priscilla, who invited him to their house, and "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." (Acts xviii. 26.)

1287. *Why did the seven sons of Sceva, a Jew, attempt to cast out devils in the name of Jesus, in whom they did not believe?* (Acts xix. 14.)

Among the Jews were some who, by calling upon the name of the true God, sometimes cast out evil spirits (par. 856). These sons of Sceva, seeing what wonderful effects followed the invocation by St. Paul of the name of Jesus, thought to imitate him.

1288. This was an act of gross superstition, and was punished accordingly. "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

1289. *What were the books burnt in presence of the apostle at Ephesus?* (Acts xix. 19.)

They were books of divination and magic art, to which study the Ephesians were much addicted.

1290. The value of the books, stated in the text to be fifty thousand pieces of silver, amounted to about $5,000.

1291. *Why did St. Paul leave Ephesus after this event?*

Because of a tumult raised by the silversmiths, or makers of silver images and shrines of Diana, the favourite idol of the Ephesians, who saw that, if the Christian religion prevailed, there was an end to their business and profits.

1292. Accordingly a riot was organized, during which it was endeavoured to kill St. Paul and his companions. The former, however, was protected by his friends, and departed for Macedonia.

1293. *Why was the day of weekly rest changed from the Sabbath, or seventh, to the first day of the week?*

Because it was upon the first day of the week that our Lord's resurrection took place.

1294. Hence this day became distinguished by the name of the Lord's day. In Acts xx. 7, we read of the weekly meetings for prayer and "breaking of bread"

being held upon the first day of the week; and in Revelation i. 10, the phrase Lord's Day is mentioned. With the Latin Church this term is used to express the Christian Sabbath, or "*Dies Dominica.*" In no part of the New Testament do we read of the weekly meetings for divine worship being held upon the seventh day, or Jewish Sabbath. Nevertheless, this is a matter which is determinable by other means than those which the Scriptures furnish, and rests solely on tradition.

1295. *Who was Tychicus* (mentioned Acts xx. 4)*?*

He was a disciple employed by the Apostle Paul to carry his letters to several churches.

1296. He was of the province of Asia, and accompanied St. Paul in his journey from Corinth to Jerusalem. He carried the epistle to the Colossians, that to the Ephesians, and the first to Timothy. The apostle calls him his dear brother, a faithful minister of the Lord, and his companion in the service of God, and had intentions of sending him to Crete, to preside there in the absence of Titus. It is thought, also, that Tychicus was sent to Ephesus while Timothy was at Rome, when he carried a letter to the Ephesians from this apostle. The Greeks make him one of the seventy and Bishop of Colophon, in the province of Asia.

1297. *What is meant by the "synagogue of the Libertines"?*

There are two opinions about these:—1. They are held to have been a congregation of freedmen, that is, of persons who, having been either born or made slaves in war, had obtained their freedom; or, 2, they were from a city in Africa, near Carthage, called Libertina, and hence were called Libertines.

1298. *Why did St. Paul, when threatened with scourging by the Jews at Jerusalem, claim the privileges of a Roman citizen?* (Acts xxii. 25.)

Because he wished to prevent what might have proved a source of scandal to some newly-converted Christians, whose constancy would have been endangered had the apostle submitted on this occasion to the degrading infliction.

1299. *How could St. Paul claim this privilege, being a Jew and a native of Tarsus?*

The privilege of Roman citizenship had been conferred upon the parents of St. Paul, and he had it by inheritance from them.

1300. The city of Tarsus had been privileged by Antony as an imperial city. The Valerian law forbade that a Roman citizen should be bound; the Sempronian law forbade that he should be scourged or beaten with rods.—(Calmet.)

A.C. 60.—Felix the Procurator.

1301. *Who was Felix, before whom St. Paul was tried?* (Acts xxiv. 25.)

He was the Roman procurator of Judea, under Claudius Cæsar (*circa* A.D. 50).

1302. Being apprehended in Jerusalem, St. Paul was sent by a written order from Claudius Lysias—the chiliarch or commandant of the Roman troops, who kept guard at the temple—to Felix at Cæsarea, where he was at first confined in Herod's judgment-hall. Upon the arrival of his accusers, they chose a spokesman in one Tertullus, and had the audacity, in order to conciliate the good-will of Felix, to express gratitude on the part of the Jews, "seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence." (Acts xxiii., xxiv.) The apostle pleaded his cause in a worthy speech, and was remanded to prison by Felix, but with some indulgences.

1303. *Why was St. Paul brought several times before Felix?*

Because that governor was in hopes of receiving a bribe from his prisoner, and was prepared upon such conditions to release him.

1304. Felix was altogether a worthy representative of the triumphant heathendom of the day. He was thoroughly bold, unscrupulous, and corrupt. Originally a slave, he had risen by the basest means to a distinguished station in the empire. This position was valuable to him only so far as it ministered to his passions. He appears to have been fond of two things chiefly, money and sensual indulgence. The Drusilla mentioned (Acts xxiv. 24), was a Jewish woman, a daughter of Herod Agrippa, who was adulterously married to Felix, her proper husband being Azizus, King of Emesa, and then living. Such a pair might well have trembled when the apostle reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come. (Acts xxiv. 25.) But the trembling of Felix was to little effect. He remitted St. Paul to prison, where he remained for a period of two years, being "left bound" when the unjust judge gave place to Festus, as he "was willing to do the Jews a pleasure." (Acts xxiv. 27.)

1305. *Why was Felix superseded in the procuratorship by Festus?*

Because by his corrupt government he had raised many seditions in Judea, and endangered its safety as a Roman province.

1306. According to Josephus, it was the practice of Felix, in conjunction with the neighbouring governors, to set the rival factions among the Jews by the ears, and when both parties were well-nigh exhausted by their contests, to fall upon them in gross and plunder them. He encouraged the formation of bands of brigands and Sicarii, or assasins, and, in short, did everything that was calculated to debase and disorganize the nation of the Jews.

A.C. 62.—Festus. Agrippa.

1307. *Who was Festus?* (Acts xxv.)

Porcius Festus was the successor of Felix, as the Roman governor of Judea, to the duties of which office he was appointed by the Emperor Nero, A.D. 55.

1308. He was, at least, greatly the superior of Felix, and is spoken favourably of by Josephus. His conduct to the apostle Paul was high-minded and just, considered from the non-Christian point of view. When the Jewish hierarchy begged him to remit the apostle to Jerusalem, intending to have him assassinated on the road, he gave a refusal, promising to have him tried where he was, namely, at Cæsarea, alleging to them "it is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him." (Acts xxv. 16.) On reaching Cæsarea he sent for and interrogated his prisoner; and finding that the matters which his accusers had against him were "questions of their own superstition, and of one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive," he asked the apostle whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried, since Festus did not feel himself skilled in such an affair. St. Paul, doubtless, because he was unwilling to put himself into the hands of his implacable enemies, requested "to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus" (by which name Nero, and the emperors generally, were designated), and was, in consequence, kept in custody till Festus had an opportunity to send him to Rome.

During his government Festus did many great and wise acts. St. Paul's eulogy of him as the "most noble Festus," was no mere piece of court flattery. When he came to Judea he found the country infested with robbers, who plundered the villages and set them on fire; the Sicarii also were numerous. Many of these miscreants he captured and put to death. Festus also sent forces, both of horse and foot, to fall upon those that had been seduced by a certain impostor, who promised them deliverance and freedom from the Roman yoke if they would follow him unto the wilderness. These troops destroyed both the impostor and his dupes. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Festus appears to have died a natural death.

1309. *Who was Agrippa II.?* (Acts xxv. 13.)

He was son of the king of the same name, who imprisoned St. Peter, and put St. James to death.

1310. He was called Herod the younger, or Herod the Second. The Berenice mentioned in this chapter as his sister was an infamous person. If Agrippa was serious in his declaration to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," he very soon allowed the impression made upon his mind to fade away. His reign of fifty-one years is stained with all sorts of crime, including the very worst. When the last war against the Romans broke out, he took part with the heathens against his countrymen. Agrippa II. died in the third year of the Emperor Trajan.

1311. *Why was Christ said to have been the first to rise from the dead* (Acts xxvi. 23), *when others before him had risen, as the widow's son, Lazarus, etc.?*

Because he was the first who rose *not to die again.*

A.C. 62—65.—St. Paul at Melita.

1312. As such, Jesus Christ had been frequently represented by the prophets; others had *been raised* to life, but had returned to their graves. He was the first, also, who *raised himself*.—(Calmet.)

1313. *Why did Festus declare St. Paul to be mad?* (Acts xxvi. 24.)

Because of the strangeness to his ears of the doctrines preached by the apostle.

1314. The resurrection of the dead, remission of sins, baptism, faith, etc., were subjects completely unintelligible to a Roman.

1315. *Why was St. Paul sent to Rome?*

Because by appealing to the emperor's court he had taken the case out of the hands of the provincial judges.

1316. *Why were the Melitans, or Maltese, among whom St. Paul and his company were wrecked, called barbarians?*

Because it was the custom among the Romans thus to designate all who did not speak the Greek or Roman languages.

1317. The term was not applied in its modern sense, as to rude or cruel people. They were extremely hospitable. The Maltese received in reward the light of faith, and their island has been a Christian bulwark against the Pagans and Turks for more than eighteen centuries.

1318. *Why did St. Paul, when at Rome, dwell (in a house) by himself with a soldier that kept him?* (Acts xxviii. 16.)

Because by favour of some influential persons he was exempted from the ordinary kind of imprisonment.

1319. St. Paul was chained, as it appears by Acts xxviii. 20. It was the custom to fasten one end of the chain by a lock to the prisoner's wrist, and the other to the wrist of the soldier who was to guard him. St. Paul won great esteem among all classes at Rome. He was allowed to go to whatever part of the city he chose. Some attribute this favour to Afranius Burrus, who was prefect of the prætorium in the year 51, and who used his authority as long as he possessed any influence over Nero's mind to repress that emperor's bad inclinations, and direct his councils with wisdom.—(Calmet.)

With the last chapter of the "Acts" the inspired record of St. Paul's history terminates. Much that is interesting in his subsequent career is to be found in the old ecclesiastical writers. But the whole is involved in obscurity. The reason of that is, that the greatest servants of God, imitating their divine model, sought always to hide their own glory—to conceal from men whatever redounded to their personal honour, and to be "buried with Christ."

Note on the Acts.

It is certain, however, that St. Paul again obtained his liberty, and made several voyages, by means of which he carried the light of the gospel into many countries. But nothing is known as to the manner or time. He finished his labours by martyrdom, being beheaded at Rome in A.C. 66, the thirteenth year of Nero.

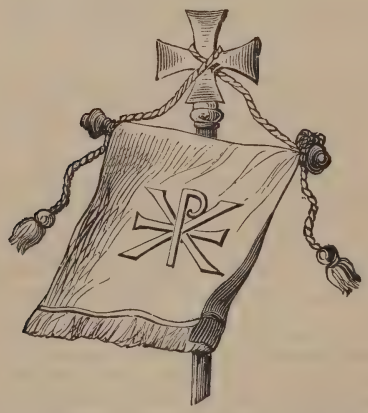
NOTE UPON THE HISTORICAL PORTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1320. Upon arriving at this point two important questions might well be asked by the Biblical student. These are :—

1. *What was the amount of success attendant upon the promulgation of the Gospel by the apostles and their immediate successors during the first ages of the Church?*

2. *Has that success been permanent?* Or, in other words, *Is the promise of Christ, that his Church* (likened to the mountain which filled the whole earth, par. 559), *should embrace all nations, and continue to the end of time in a fair way of accomplishment?*

The answers to these questions are readily furnished. The limits and scope of the present work preclude more lengthened details, but it may be boldly and thank-



THE "LABURUM," OR STANDARD OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE UNDER CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

(The monogram in the centre is the abbreviation of *Christos*, Christ.)

fully stated, in answer to the first, that, departing from Jerusalem, and distributing their forces over the then known world, the Apostles everywhere met with the most signal success; and this success was followed up so perfectly, that at the end of three hundred years, the very centre of civilization and dominion, the city of Rome

Note on the Acts.

itself, *of* itself, and without any pressure from without, erected the standard of the cross upon its ensign, as the mark and emblem of the empire.

In answer to the second, that, In the present year, eighteen hundred and fifty-nine after the birth of Christ, there is scarcely a spot of earth whither man has penetrated, or where civilization has reached, in which the gospel has not been preached, and that successfully.

As to the future permanency of Christianity, the system which has seen the rise and fall of thrones, empires, and dynasties, and is still only increasing, may—apart from the divine guarantee, if it be possible so to consider it—be safely left to fill up the remaining measure of the earth's allotted time.

The following passages will be found very pertinent to the matter under consideration, and are but little known.

1321. The Testimony of the Emperor Napoleon the First to the Success of the New Dispensation.

(*Extracted from his conversations with General Bertrand and others at St. Helena.**)

"It is neither one day nor one battle which has accomplished this event. Is it the life of a man then? No. It is a war, a long combat of three hundred years, commenced by the apostles and carried on by their successors, and by the continued succession of Christian generations. All the first preachers of Christianity suffered martyrdom. Thus, during a space of three centuries, the presidential chair of the Church was a scaffold, which inevitably ensured the death of him who was called to occupy it; and seldom, indeed, during that period of three hundred years, was a better fate reserved for the other bishops. In that war all the monarchs and all the powers of the earth were placed on one side, and on the other I do not perceive any army, but a mysterious energy—a few men, indeed, dispersed here and there in all the quarters of the globe, having no other rallying point but the common faith in the mystery of the cross. What a strange symbol! His disciples are armed with the instrument which inflicted the tortures upon the God-man. They carry the cross in the world, a sign of their faith, a burning flame which is communicated from one to the other. 'Christ—God,' they say, 'died for the salvation of men.' What a struggle, what a storm do these simple words raise around the humble standard on which the God-man suffered! What quantities of blood have been shed on both sides! What fury! But here anger and all the bitterness of hatred and violence; there mildness, moral courage, a wonderful resignation. During three hundred years the mind struggles against the coarseness of animal passion, the conscience against despotism, the soul against the body, virtue against every vice. The blood of the Christians flows in torrents; even when in the last agonies of death they kiss the hand of him who kills them. The soul alone protests, while the body is given up to all kinds of torture. Everywhere the Christians fall, and everywhere they triumph.

"Can you imagine a man after death obtaining conquests with a faithful army devoted to his memory? Can you conceive a phantom who has at his command

* From "The Massacre of the Carmes," by J. A. Belaney.

Note on the Acts.

soldiers without pay, without hope in this world, and who inspires them with perseverance and energy under every kind of privation? Alas! the body of Turenne was yet warm when his army retreated before Montecuculli; and with regard to myself, my armies forget me, though I am still living, as the Carthaginian army forgot Hannibal. Behold the power of us great men! a single battle lost crushes us, and adversity deprives us of our friends. How many Judases have I seen around me? Ah! if I have not been able to persuade these great politicians, these generals who have betrayed me; if they have disavowed my name, and denied to their sovereign the miracles of a real affection for my country, and of a fidelity which nothing could impair; if I who have led them so often to victory am not able when living to reanimate these selfish hearts, by what means then can I when chilled by death maintain and keep alive their zeal? Can you imagine Cæsar continuing to rule over the Roman senate, and from the depth of his tomb governing the empire, and watching over the destinies of Rome? *Such is the history of the invasion and of the conquest of the world by Christianity!* Behold the power of the God of the Christians, and the perpetual miracle of the progress of the faith and the government of his Church. Nations pass away, thrones crumble to pieces, and *it* remains. What, then, is the force that sustains it, assailed by the furious storm of passion, and of the contempt of an unbelieving age? Whose arm has sustained it? We extol the conquests of Alexander! Well, here is a conqueror who confiscates for his own advantage; who unites, who incorporates in himself, not one nation only, but the whole human race. What a miracle! The human soul, with all its faculties, becomes united with the existence of Christ; and how? By a miracle which exceeds all miracles. He will have the love of man; that is, he will have that which is the most difficult to obtain—that which a wise man seeks in vain from his friends, a father from his children, a wife from her husband, a brother from a brother—in a word, the heart; that is what he will have, he exacts it absolutely, and he instantly succeeds. I conclude from this his divinity. Alexander, Cæsar, Hannibal, Louis XIV., with all their genius, have failed in this point. They have conquered the world, and they have not gained one single friend. . . . Christ speaks, and from that moment generations are united to him by closer and more intimate ties than those of blood; by a union more sacred, more binding than any other. He kindles the flame of a love which extinguishes the love of self, which prevails over every other love. On viewing this miracle of his will, how is it possible not to recognize the Word, the Creator of the world? Thus the greatest miracle of Christ, without contradiction, is the reign of charity. He alone has the power of raising the hearts of men to the invisible world, to the sacrifice of all temporal concerns. He alone, in instituting this sacrifice, has established a bond between heaven and earth. All those who believe in him feel within them this marvellous supernatural and all-perfect love—a phenomenon not to be explained, not to be understood by reason, or by the powers of man. A sacred fire is diffused over the earth by this new Prometheus, of which Time, the great destroyer, can neither impair the force nor limit the duration. It is that which I (Napoleon) admire most, because I have often thought of it; *and it is that which proves to me, beyond all doubt, the divinity of Christ.* . . . . . Now that I am at St. Helena—now that I am fixed down to this rock—who fights my battles and conquers kingdoms for me? Where are my courtiers in my misfortunes—does any one even bestow a thought on me? Who in Europe stirs himself on my behalf, who remains faithful to me?

"Such is the destiny of great men—that of Cæsar and Alexander—we are forgotten! and the name of a conqueror, such as that of an emperor, becomes merely a college theme! Our exploits fall under the ferula of a pedant, who either praises or insults us with his criticisms. . . . . Behold the approaching destiny of the great Napoleon! What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ, which is preached up, incensed, loved, adored, living in all the universe? Is that dying? Is it not rather living? Behold the death of Christ! Behold that of God!"

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION.

1322. *Why was the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans written?*

The design of St. Paul in inditing this letter was, by a full development of the gospel doctrine, to confirm the faith of the Roman Christians, and to terminate some domestic disputes which then prevailed among the believers.

1323. The Church at Rome had become divided. The Jewish and Gentile converts were at variance; the former insisting upon their birthright as the eldest born to Christ, and presuming upon the promises made to their fathers. On account of which they assumed priority or preference over the converted Gentiles, regarding the latter as foreigners, admitted out of pure favour into the society of believers and to the participation of Christian privileges. The Gentile converts, on the other hand, stood upon the merit of their sages and philosophers, the wisdom and prudence of their legislators, the purity of their morality, and their exactness in following the law of nature. They reproached the Jews with the disobedience of their forefathers to God and the laws he had given them; that they had frequently returned to idolatry; that they had persecuted and put to death the prophets, and even their Messiah, the true Son of God, etc., etc.

St. Paul shows that neither the Jew nor the Gentile had reason to boast, but to humble themselves under the hand of God; that neither could pretend to merit, or had reason to glory or boast of their calling; which proceeded from the grace and mercy of God.

1324. *Why is the epistle to the Romans placed first among the canonical epistles?*

1. Because of the dignity of the imperial city to which it is directed. 2. Because of the magnificence and sublimity of the evangelical mysteries of which it treats.

1325. As the seat of empire and the destined scene of the martyrdom of the two chief apostles, Rome fairly claimed this preference. As to the second point, "The epistle of St. Paul to the Romans," says Dr. MacKnight, "for sublimity and truth of sentiment, for brevity and strength of expression, for regularity in its structure, but above all for the unspeakable importance of the discoveries which it contains, stands unrivalled by any mere human composition, and as far exceeds the most celebrated productions of the learned Greeks and Romans as the shining of the sun exceeds the twinkling of the stars."*

1326. *When was the epistle to the Romans written?*

It was written about the year 57, or 58, three years before St. Paul's first visit to Rome, while he was preparing to go to Jerusalem with the charitable contributions and alms collected in Achaia and Macedonia, for the benefit and relief of the poor Christians in Judea.

1327. The epistle to the Romans was written in Greek at Corinth. St. Paul's secretary was named Tertius. The apostle visited the church addressed twice: first A.C. 61, when he appealed to Cæsar; and then A.C. 65, a year before his martyrdom, which happened in A.C. 66.

1328. *Why was St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians written?*

The intention of this epistle was to put an end to certain divisions that had arisen among the Christians of Corinth, in consequence of the indiscretion of some new teachers.

1329. Corinth was the capital of Achaia, a very rich and populous city of Greece, where St. Paul had preached during more than a year, and converted a great many. Having received a letter from them, and being informed of the disputes above alluded to, he wrote the present epistle, sending it by the same persons, Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, who had brought him that of the Corinthians. It was written about the year 56, and from Ephesus.

1330. *What was the cause of the dispute in which Apollos is named?* (Cor. iii. 6.)

There was a tendency among the Corinthian converts to form parties or sections under particular leaders, which the great talents and excellent qualities of Apollos rather increased; but neither he nor his distinguished colleague St. Paul consented for a moment to any such fancies, and the passages recorded in Cor. iii. 6 were written to put an end to them.

* "Truth of the Gospel History." London, 1763, 4to.

Early Heresies.

1331. Some writers imagine that Apollos differed to some extent from St. Paul upon the subject of the concessions which it might be advisable to make in favour of Judaical practices, as concerned converts from the Hebrew nation. There does not appear to be sufficient ground for any such opinion. Apollos was so displeased with the Corinthians for their party-forming habits, that he withdrew to another scene. He went to Crete, and while there the first epistle to the Corinthians was written. He was afterwards induced by St. Paul to revisit Corinth, and ultimately became bishop of that city; which fact should be held a sufficient proof that there could be no difference in point of sentiment between the two teachers.

1332. *Why did the heresies spring up in the infant Church against which the apostle* (1 Cor. xi. 19; Gal. v. 20; Titus iii. 10, etc.) *warns the Christians?*

Because (in the language of Professor Burton):—"Many persons who professed to follow the instructions of the apostles, took such parts of the gospel as suited their views or struck their fancy; but these rays of light became mixed up and buried in such a mass of absurdity, that the apostles themselves would hardly have recognized their own doctrines."*

1333. The chief of these heretics were the Nazareans, the Ebionites, and the Cerinthians.

The *Nazareans* were a sect of men between Jews and Christians, but abhorred by both. They allowed Christ to be the greatest of prophets, but said that he was a mere man, whose natural parents were Mary and Joseph; they joined all the ceremonies of the old law with the new, and observed both the Jewish Sabbath and the Sunday.

The *Ebionites* were akin to the former, whose opinions they held generally, with some distinct errors of their own. Ebion, the founder of this sect, taught that Christ was *created* like one of the angels, but greater than the rest; that he was conceived and born, nevertheless, in the natural way, and chosen to be the son of God by the Holy Ghost descending upon him in the form of a dove.

The *Cerinthians* taught similar doctrines—maintained the obligation of circumcision, the distinction between clean and unclean meats, attributed the creation of the world to the angels, etc. Cerinthus, the originator, lived with Ebion about the time of the destruction of the Jewish temple by Titus. He particularly distinguished his heresy by the novel notion that the two natures in Jesus Christ were easily separable, and under this theory he asserted that during the passion the divine part of Jesus absented itself, leaving the human part only to suffer. In other words, he separated Jesus from Christ Christ, according to his theory, when the time of suffering came on, departed and Jesus alone remained.

St. John's horror of Cerinthus is well exhibited in the anecdote recorded by Irenæus, who declares that he had it from the mouth of Polycarp, an eye and ear witness. The beloved apostle was one day about to enter a public bath in company with one of his disciples, when he saw Cerinthus also enter the building. St. John

* Bampton Lectures.

Secular allusions in the Epistles.

started back, and bade his friend come away, "Let us," said he, "come away lest the bath wherein is Cerinthus, that enemy of the truth, sh uld fall upon our heads."

1334. *Why did the apostle Paul* (1 Cor. xi.) *discourse upon the covering or uncovering of the head in public worship?*

Because, as is evident from the context, that he had been requested to give some directions upon that subject.

1335. It was the practice among the Greek Christians—the Corinthians were among the most distinguished of these—to uncover their heads when attending divine service. But in other and more Eastern parts of the Church the practice of worshipping with the head covered was retained. The question to be decided was which was the best—should the Western practice yield to that of the Eastern Church, or *vice versa?* The apostle says:—

ROMAN LADY'S HEAD-DRESS.

1. That they should abide by the rules he had given them. (That he had advised the uncovering of the head by the male, and its being veiled at least by the female portion of the congregation, is evident.)

2. He argues that as it is a kind of shame for a man to wear long hair, and for a woman to be bald, so his advice relative to the subject had a natural recommendation.

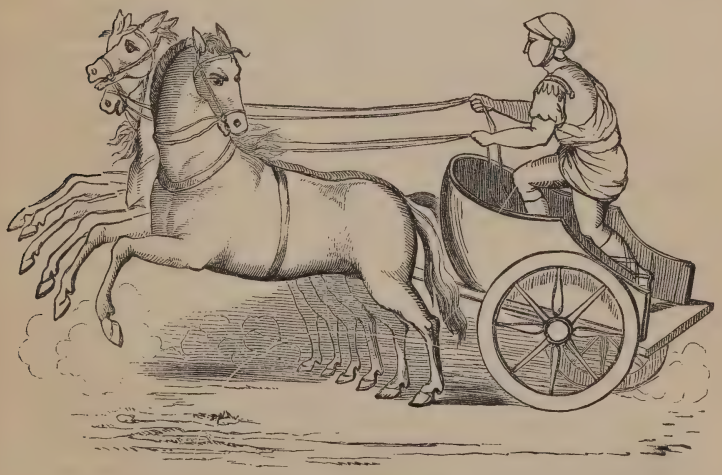
3. He tells them that contentiousness is worse than any breach of etiquette, insinuating that they must not be bigotted either way (1 Cor. xi. 16).

1336. *Why does St. Paul recommend the Corinthians to cultivate prophesying?*

In the New Testament language, "prophesying" frequently means preaching, and the apostle recommends the arts of preaching to the consideration of his converts, rather than the acquisition of supernatural gifts.

1337. When the first disciples went forth, and in the synagogues and other places of meeting, addressed the people, it frequently happened that between the preacher and a portion of his auditory, an interpreter of languages was needed. Because not only did nations differ in their speech from nations, but even towns and villages from each other. 1 Corinthians xiv., which treats of this subject, sets forth by saying, "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts: but rather that ye may prophesy." It goes on to say that even the supernatural gift of tongues—that is

the knowledge without study, of divers languages, is less important or desirable than the faculty of addressing appropriate and searching words—words suitable and well applied to the occasion and auditory. The preacher may address fine words to his flock, he may fully intend to teach and edify, he may pray with the best intentions, but "how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say 'Amen' at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. . . . . If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth?"



ANCIENT CHARIOT RACER.

1338. *Why did St. Paul, in his epistles to the Corinthians, the Hebrews, the Philippians, and others, frequently allude to and draw comparisons from the ancient games, and especially the races?*

Because these classical contests formed an essential part of the system and mode of life of the peoples to whom the apostle

chiefly addressed himself, and lent the readiest and best understood illustrations which a preacher at that time could select.

1339. The Romans derived the most of their games from the Greeks, by whom they had been cultivated and fostered to a degree which it is difficult at this time of day to appreciate. These comprised chariot-racing, horse-racing, foot-racing, quoiting, wrestling, darting, boxing, etc. Every class, especially the highest, was prepared for excellence in these contests by a careful training in youth, which developed and strengthened every part of the bodily frame, rendering the eye acute, the limbs pliant and tendonous, doubling at least the ordinary powers of the hands and feet, and quickening all the senses and bodily faculties.

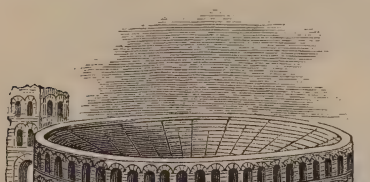
The severity of the preparatory discipline used, is illustrated by the following passage from Epictetus:—"You wish to conquer at the Olympic games. Consider first what precedes and follows, and then, if it be for your advantage, engage in the affair. You must conform to rules; submit to a diet; refrain from dainties; exercise your body, whether you choose it or not, in a stated hour, in heat and cold; you must drink no cold water, nor sometimes wine; in a word, you must give yourself up to your master, as to a physician. Then in the combat you may be thrown into a ditch, dislocate your arm, turn your ankle, swallow abundance of dust, be whipped, and after all lose the victory. When you have reckoned on all this, if your inclination still holds, set about the combat."

The most important of these references are as follow:—

"*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain.*" (1 Cor. ix. 24.)

Here the words addressed to the Corinthian converts recalled a most familiar image. The course, or *dromos*, at Corinth, where the races were run, was one of the most famous in the world. It was situated on the isthmus of Corinth, whence the name Isthmian Games. Of course one only received the prize. The prize was usually a crown.

"*Wherefore seeing we also are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*" (Heb. xii. 1.)



AMPHITHEATRE, VERONA.

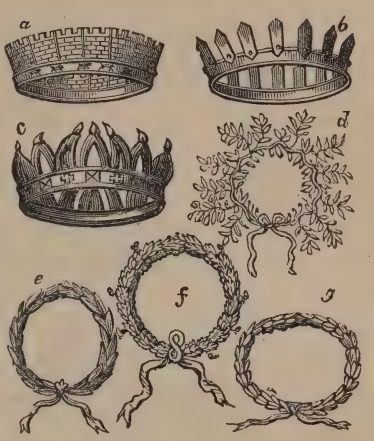
The cloud of witnesses here referred to were—1. the multitude of spectators surrounding the *dromos* or course. 2. The heavenly as well as earthly witnesses of that spiritual race, which the followers of the gospel rule had to run.

"*Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.*" (1 Cor. ix. 25.)

The usual mode of rewarding victors, whether in the wars or games, was by the bestowal of crowns. The highest reward was the *civic crown*, *f*, made of oak leaves, and conferred on him who had saved the life of a citizen. The person who received

Secular allusions of St. Paul.

it wore it at the spectacles, and sat next the senate. The *mural crown*, *a*, was bestowed on him who first scaled the walls of a city. The *embattled crown*, *b*, on him who first mounted the rampart or entered the camp of the enemy. The *naval crown*, *c*, was bestowed for naval exploits. The *grass crown*, *d*, was for lesser merits. The *chaplets*, *e*, *f*, *g*, given in the Olympic games, were of laurel, vine, or parsley. These, though in part made of evergreens, would speedily fade. Their essential insignificance, compared with the great efforts by which they were won, are frequently alluded to by the satirists of St. Paul's age. The comparison between the fading chaplet and the eternal reward of the just in heaven would be well understood.



a, Mural crown; *b*, Embattled crown (*corona vallaris*); *v*, Naval crown; *d*, Crown of grass: *e*, Triumphal crown; *f*, Civic crown; *g*, Oval crown.

The text—

"*But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection*" (1 Cor. ix. 27),

—is explained, as to the secular allusion, in the above quotation from Epictetus. Another illustration is to be found in the fact that those who, in the Isthmian games, strove to gain the prize in running or boxing were required to pass ten months in the gymnasium of Elis, in order to prepare themselves by exercises and a rigid diet. Abstinence and self denial, as essential to the Christian combat, are hereby inculcated.

"*Not as one beating the air.*" (1 Cor. ix. 26.)

In order to acquire agility and skill, aspirants exercised themselves with weapons apart from an antagonist. This was called "shadow fighting," beating the air, literally. The opponents for whom St. Paul prepared his neophytes were not of this kind. These were the prejudices and the persecutions of Roman and Greek heathendom, their own fallen nature, and the powers of darkness. The greater portion, probably, of those to whom this epistle was first addressed, had to witness to the death, either in the arena with lions, or in fetid dungeons under the relentless heel of their Pagan rulers.

"*I press toward the mark for the prize.*" (1 Phil. iii. 14.)

This refers to the foot-races at the Isthmian games. The prize to be run for at these games was exhibited in such a manner as to be visible to all the runners. Thus their emulation was excited. The eternal prize for which the apostle ran, namely, the vision of God in heaven, was set ever before his eyes by contemplation and prayer.

The Contests of the Arena.

1340. *Why was the second epistle to the Corinthians written?*

St. Paul had in his first epistle written rather severely to his converts; the effect thereby produced was very great. He

ROMAN BOXERS.

therefore wrote this second epistle to comfort and strengthen the flock, admonishing them to persevere in a proper course, and especially to avoid false teachers.

1341. Among other things, the first epistle had contained a sentence of excommunication—a cutting-off from Church fellowship—against a Christian who was living in a shockingly scandalous manner. (1 Cor. v. 1.) Having been informed of the repentance and amendment of this person, St. Paul in his second epistle pro-

nounces his pardon and reintegration with the congregation of the faithful. (2 Cor. ii. 6.) The false teachers alluded to having a habit of praising themselves, and depreciating the merits and authority of St. Paul, the latter takes occasion to defend himself from their attacks, and enumerates, in a grand yet modest style, the sufferings he had gone through, and the favours he had received from God.

The second epistle was written but a short time subsequent to the first—about the year 57—some months before that to the Romans. The place from which it was written is not quite clearly known. It was from some part of Macedonia, probably from Philippi.

1342. *Why was the epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians written?*

Because of some controversies which had been raised by the Jewish converts with the Gentile Christians concerning circumcision, and some other lesser matters.

1343. The Galatians, soon after St. Paul had preached the gospel to them, were seduced by some false teachers who had been Jews, and who were for obliging all Christians, even those who had been Gentiles, to observe circumcision and the other ceremonies of the Mosaical law. In this epistle he refutes the doctrine of these teachers, and also their calumny against his mission and apostleship. The Galatians were originally Gauls, who, under their leader Brennus, spread themselves over Greece, and at length passed into Asia Minor, where they settled between Cappadocia and Phrygia, in the province afterwards called from them Galatia. It seems that St. Peter preached first in those parts; but it was only to the Jews, as may be gathered from the inscription of his first epistle, which he addresses to the Jews of Pontus, etc. But St. Paul was the first that preached to the Gentile inhabitants of this province. When he first preached to them he was received as an angel from heaven, or rather as Christ himself; he visited them oftener than once, and the church he there formed was very considerable. But the Jewish converts caused the troubles which gave rise to this epistle, in setting up the old legal observances. The apostle herein rectifies matters, declares the dignity and authority of his mission, and exhorts upon various heads. St. Jerome states that this epistle was written from Rome, while its author was in chains for the truth. Others maintain that it was sent from Ephesus.

1344. *Why does St. Paul in his epistles allude to the military equipments of a soldier?*

Because he could use no images of a more apposite character, or with which his correspondents were more familiar.

1345. It is not necessary to point out how intimate was the knowledge possessed by St. Paul upon these matters, or how thoroughly, when these epistles were written, the Roman military element penetrated all ranks and parts of the empire. It will have been seen, by what has been before stated, that the one distinguishing mark of the time was the universally-present Roman legionary. The whole world

Military allusions in the Epistles.

had been subjected to the Roman yoke, and even where the policy of the conquerors had left to the conquered people some remants of their national peculiarities or characteristic colouring, the fashion of Rome prevailed. Many cities, called free cities, were permitted to maintain garrisons of national troops, and to enjoy a shadow of national independence; but here the nationality, whatever it might be, soon faded away, and the military system became entirely assimilated to that of the dominant city. The costume of a Roman soldier then was the universal type, and as such was alluded to by St. Paul. The principal of these references occur in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, and are as follow:—

ROMAN LEGIONARY.

"*Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

"*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*" (Eph. vi. 10, 11.)

The armour of a Roman soldier, speaking in general terms, consisted of the demi-cylindrical buckler or shield, the cuirass or pectoral (breastplate), the casque or helmet, and the ocrea or greave.

"*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,*" *etc.* (Eph. vi. 12.)

"The young soldier was regularly trained to the exercises of running, leaping, vaulting, *wrestling*, and swimming."—(Carr's "Roman Antiquities.")

"*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.*" (Eph. vi. 14.)

The cuirass or pectoral was a hollow plate of brass, about a foot square, adapted to the form of the chest, and fastened with thongs of leather protected with metallic scales; but the centurions and foremost legionaries rendered themselves still more impenetrable to the steel of the enemy by using chain armour covered with brass scales, or iron rings twisted within one another like chains.

"*And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.*" (Eph. vi. 15.)

Military allusions in the Epistles.

The soldiers at first went nearly barefoot; as the Roman power advanced more care was taken of the feet. Under the emperors the sandal was improved into a kind of boot, and even studded with nails. The annexed cut shows how carefully the foot was protected in St. Paul's time.

ROMAN SANDAL.

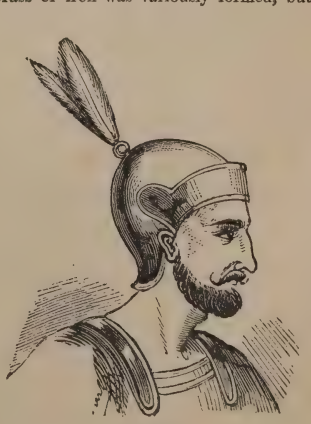
"*Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*" (Eph. vi. 16.)

The buckler, anciently round, had, in the time of the apostles, been superseded by the demi-cylindrical or oblong "scutum." This shield, four feet in length by two feet and a half in breadth, and constructed in the form of a tile, was composed of two or three pieces of timber, fashioned and secured together in the manner of staves, covered with leather, strengthened at each end by a band of iron, and provided in the middle with an *umbo* or boss of metal, for the purpose of turning aside the missiles and pikes of the enemy.

SHIELD.

"*And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.*" (Eph. vi. 17.)

The casque, helmet, or head-piece of brass or iron was variously formed, but generally fitted projections at the base for protecting the neck and shoulders, and in most cases attached under the chin by mentonnières covered with scales of brass. The helmet was generally adorned with a crest. The sword in use, called the Spanish sword, was common to all the infantry of the legion. It had a short, broad blade of excellent temper, which serves either to cut or thrust. It was two-edged, which quality is referred to by St. Paul in Heb. iv. 12:—"The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."

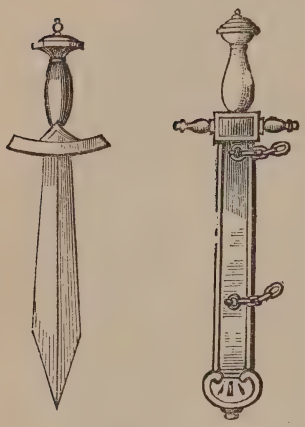


HELMET.

Sufferings of the Primitive Christians.

1346. *What is the meaning of the phrase, "For I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"?* (Gal. vi. 17.)

St. Paul intended to say in those words that he had realized in his own person some of the sufferings of Christ; in other words, that his body bore the marks of the persecutions he had endured on account of his apostleship.



TWO-EDGED SWORD.

1347. It was an ancient custom to mark or brand with certain well understood characters the bodies of soldiers, fugitives, and domestics. Doubtless St. Paul had these *insignia* in his mind when he penned the allusion in Gal. vi. 17. But with reference to the marks received by the servants of Christ who had to pass through the hands of the heathen judges, it may be as well to consider what the nature of these inflictions were.

Foxe, in his "Acts and Monuments," speaking of the earliest preachers of the gospel, and quoting from Eusebius, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and others, says:—

"Some were slain with the sword; some burnt with fire; some with whips scourged; some stabbed with forks of iron; some fastened to the cross or gibbet; some drowned in the sea; some their skins plucked off; some their tongues cut out; some stoned to death; some killed with cold; some starved with hunger; some their hands cut off alive, or otherwise dismembered, have been so left naked to the open shame of the world. Neither yet were these tyrants and organs of Satan thus contented with death only, to bereave the life from the body. The kinds of death were divers, and no less horrible than divers. Whatsoever the cruelness of man's invention could devise for the punishment of man's body was practised against the Christians, as partly I have mentioned before; and more appeared by the epistle sent from the brethren of France hereafter following. Crafty trains, outcries of enemies, stripes and scourgings, drawings, tearings, stonings, plates of iron laid unto them burning hot, deep dungeons, racks, strangling in prisons, the teeth of wild beasts, gridirons, gibbets and gallows, tossing upon the horns of bulls. Moreover, when they were thus killed, their bodies were laid in heaps, and dogs there left to keep them, that no man might come to bury them, neither would any prayer obtain them to be interred and buried."

That St. Paul, at the time of his writing this epistle, was a partaker in these sufferings—short of actual death—is evident by the eleventh chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, wherein he says:—

Sufferings of the Primitive Christians.

"Are they ministers of Christ? I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

"Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.

"In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.

"In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness," etc., etc.

The trial of a Christian prisoner brought before a Roman judge was somewhat after the following manner. The account is drawn from various authorities:—

The magistrates were seated on the subsellia, one of the Duumvirs presiding, in his white robe bordered with purple; his lictors standing behind him. Near the door of the court, to confront the prisoner on his first entrance, were the usual instruments of torture. There were the heavy yoke for the neck, of iron or of wood, similar to what in China is called the *canga;* the fetters; the stocks, in which hands and feet were inserted at distances from each other which strained or dislocated the joints. There, too, were the rods with thorns in them; the whips and thongs; cutting with iron or bruising with lead; the heavy clubs; the hook for digging into the flesh; the *ungula,* said to have been a pair of scissors; iron combs, or rakes for tearing; and there was the wheel, fringed with spikes, on which the culprit was stretched; and there was the fire ready lighted, with the water hissing and groaning in the large cauldrons which were placed upon it.

The Christian culprit was now brought in, and the sight of the place, with its furniture, would be enough to appal a stout heart. He was asked, Are you a Christian? Upon the reply everything depended. If made in the affirmative, he was exhorted by the allegiance he owed as a subject of the empire, to the gods, and to the *divine* emperor, to abandon the foolish plea, to renounce the folly of the Nazarenes, and to sacrifice, in the prescribed form, to the genius of the Cæsars. There was an altar prepared, a flame already lit, incense burning, priests in waiting; let them be called in and sacrifice made, all would then be over: the prisoner would be acquitted and even honoured by the authorities. If, however, the plea was obstinately persisted in, sentence was immediately pronounced. This would be death, not immediate—that would have been too merciful—but death slow and lingering. The offender was first to be thrown into the disgusting Barathrum or Tullianum (par. 1271); then to be stretched on the rack, or otherwise tortured; lastly to be beheaded, or thrown to the beasts; and in case of death by decapitation, the body to be cast to the dogs. To give the details of an ordinary martyrdom is neither necessary nor within the scope of the present work. The way in which death was met by the great majority of the first Christians may be learned from the accounts furnished so copiously by the Church historians, especially Eusebius.

At the commencement of the second century, Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was summoned to bear witness to the faith of Christ. So far from shrinking from the trial, he gloried in it. "From Syria to Rome," he says in his epistle to the Church at Rome,* "I fight with wild beasts, by land and by sea, by night and by day, being

* Translated in Townsend's edition of Foxe's "Acts and Monuments."

chained among ten leopards (that is, a band of soldiers), who are made even worse by kind treatment. By their injuries, however, I learn daily the more to be a disciple of Jesus; yet am I not hereby justified. Oh that I were come to the real wild beasts, which are prepared for me! May I find them eager to despatch me! I will encourage them to devour me without delay, and not use me as some, whom through fear they would not touch. And if they will not despatch me willingly, I will provoke them to it. Pardon me; I know what is good for me. Now I begin to be a disciple. I care for nothing, of visible or invisible things, so that I may but win Christ. Let fire and the cross, let the companies of wild beasts, let breaking of bones and tearing of limbs, let the grinding of the whole body, and all the malice of the devil come upon me; be it so, only may I win Christ Jesus."

When finally his sentence was put into execution, he stood up boldly and defiantly before the lions. These were cowed by his venerable and majestic appearance, and doubtless by that virtue which seemed to radiate from his body. He, however, spoke out loudly, crying, "I am the wheat of Christ; I am going to be ground with the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread." At length the ferocious animals seized the holy martyr and despatched him. He suffered in the eleventh year of Trajan, A.C. 109.

1348. *What was the object of the epistle to the Ephesians?*

St. Paul in this epistle had a two-fold object, which was dogmatic and hortatory. The earlier part treats of matters of faith, the latter chapters of the practice of morality.

1349. Ephesus was the capital of Asia Minor, and celebrated for its temple of Diana, to which the majority of the people of the East went frequently to worship. But St. Paul having upon two occasions preached there—the first time for nearly two years, the second for one year—a numerous church was established. He wrote this epistle to them when he was a prisoner at Rome, and sent it by Tychicus. He admonishes them to hold fast the faith they had received, and warns them and also those of the neighbouring cities against the sophistry of the philosophers, and the doctrines of false teachers, who were come among them. It was written about the year 62.

1350. *Why does St. Paul address the Ephesian converts as saints?* (Eph. i. 1.)

Because the term, signifying holy, was appropriately applied to those who had been baptized and had received the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

1351. The fervour and simplicity of the first Christians, their community of goods, the cheerfulness with which they endured sufferings, and even laid down their lives for Christ, and the mutual charity existing between them, which excited the admiration of the very heathens themselves, doubtless gave them the best claim to be addressed as saints. The term had been used under the old dispensation. The

rebels, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, addressing Moses and Aaron (Numb. xvi. 3) had said:—"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy (or saints), every one of them." But if the faithful observers of the old law were thereby declared holy, with how much more reason might the disciples of Christ be thus addressed.—(Brown.)

1352. *Why does St. Paul say, "Be angry, and sin not"?* (Eph. iv. 26.)

Because he wishes to show that although anger is a dangerous passion, and if indulged, leading to much evil, it may be a just and reasonable emotion if regulated and directed against a legitimate object.

1353. Our Saviour was undoubtedly angry when he drove the traffickers from the temple. God is angry with evil-doers every day. The context, "let not the sun go down upon your wrath," shows that anger, however just, must not be suffered to grow. If moved to anger we must return without delay to a calmness of mind and temper.

1354. *Why was the epistle to the Philippians written by St. Paul?*

To thank that congregation of Christians for their benefactions to the apostle and the infant churches. Also to convey to them some admonitions concerning charity, unity, and humility, etc., and to warn them against false teachers.

1355. Philippi, a considerable city of Macedonia, was named after Philip, father to Alexander the Great. St. Paul had preached there, as related in Acts xvi. The Philippians had a great veneration for the apostle, and supplied his wants when he was at Corinth, and again when he was a prisoner at Rome, sending to him by Epaphroditus, who is thought to have been the Bishop of Philippi.

This epistle it written throughout in a very animated and elevated style. It is full of the most sublime and the most affectionate exhortations: it resembles more the production of a father addressing his children, than that of an apostle laying down authoritatively what is to be received and followed. The whole of it shows how very much St. Paul loved and estimated those to whom he addressed it.*

1356. *Who were the bishops and deacons mentioned?* (Phil. i. 1.)

By bishops many understand those who were only the chief ministers of particular churches, not the superintendents of

* Dr. Kitto.

dioceses as at present. St. Chrysostom also observes that the name deacon was applied to any minister under the "bishop."

1357. *Why does St. Paul* (Phil. i. 7) *speak of his "bonds" and the "defence of the gospel"?*

Because he was then enduring his first imprisonment at Rome, and was waiting for his trial as a Christian before the tribunals.

1358. *Who was Clement, mentioned* Phil. iv. 3?

The disciple "whose name is in the book of life" was the fourth bishop of Rome.

1359. The church at Corinth having been disturbed by divisions, Clement wrote a letter to the Corinthians, which was so much esteemed by the ancients, that they read it publicly in many churches. It is still extant, and some have inclined to rank it among the canonical writings. It breathes a spirit of true Christian charity and simplicity. We have no authentic accounts of what occurred to Clement during the persecutions of Domitian; we are assured that he lived to the third year of Trajan, A.C. 160.—(Calmet.)

1360. *Why was the epistle to the Colossians written?*

Because St. Paul wished to disabuse that church of some errors that had been taught by Cerinthus, a heretic, concerning the angels, whom he (Cerinthus) had placed superior to Christ, and recommended the Colossians to worship.

1361. St. Paul begins his epistle by insisting chiefly on the exalted state of Christ, saying, that "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. i. 15.) From this argument he deduces the inutility of the Jewish law, its ceremonies, etc.

The epistle was dated by St. Paul from his prison at Rome, shortly before his death.

1362. *Why did St. Paul write the epistles to the Thessalonians?*

Because after preaching in their city, and making numerous converts, a number of unbelieving Jews, envying his success, raised a commotion against him, and he, with his companion Silas, were obliged to quit the place.

The Second Coming of Christ.

1363. But coming to Corinth he wrote there the first and second epistles in order to confirm the faith of the new disciples.

In the former the apostle gives many encouragements to his flock to persevere, and, in order to refute some errors upon the subject then rife, treats of the resurrection of the dead and the after state of souls. In the second he speaks of the day of final retribution, and prays for his flock. This second epistle was sent soon after the first, *i. e.*, about the year 52.

1364. *Why is there in the epistle to the Thessalonians not a single quotation from the Old Testament?*

Because the persons addressed were for the most part Gentiles, to whom the Hebrew Scriptures were totally unknown.

1365. The one exception to this remark is in the use of the word Satan (1 Thess. ii. 18), with which name the Gentiles could not have been acquainted except through the sacred text.

1366. *Why are the Thessalonians said to have received the word in much affliction?* (1 Thess. i. 6.)

The apostle here refers to the tribulations they brought upon themselves by their reception of the gospel.

1367. *Why are the unbelieving Jews said* (1 Thess. ii. 16) *to "fill up their sin always"?*

The meaning of the passage is, that these persons were hastening, as it were, to exhaust the patience of God, to fill up the measure of his anger and their sins.

1368. The Jews filled up the measure of their sins by the opposition they everywhere showed to the religion of Christ. The earliest fathers of the church testify that they dispersed emissaries into every nation to blaspheme the name of Christ, and hence sprung the evil fame which Christians bore among the Pagans. As, for instance, the reports that in their concealed celebrations they sacrificed young infants and drank their blood—that they sacrificed to an ass's head, etc. These base calumnies are plentifully related in the apology of St. Justin, by Tertullian, Origen, and others, who accuse the Jews openly of being the authors of them.

1369. *Why does St. Paul caution the Thessalonians concerning the day of our Lord's second appearance?* (2 Thess. ii. 1—3.*)

Because there was a very prevalent belief at that time that

* "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as *that the day of Christ is at hand*"

the end of the world was very near at hand. It was commonly received by both the Jewish and Gentile converts, that the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of final retribution would be nearly if not absolutely coincident.

1370. Some false teachers, taking advantage of certain expressions in the first epistle (1 Thess. v. 2, 3), had began to sound a terrible alarm, declaring that the last day was immediately approaching. St. Paul in this passage takes occasion to allay these apprehensions by showing that many events had yet to occur, which of necessity should precede the second appearance of Christ—that the Thessalonians were not to be shaken by the assertions of these unauthorized alarmists, but were calmly to await the day, whenever it might arrive.

1371. *Why were the Thessalonians exhorted* (2 Thess. ii. 15) *to "hold the traditions which" they "had been taught, whether by word or by epistle"?*

Because the New Testament Scriptures had not then been written, or at least not in such a complete way as to preclude the necessity for an oral communication of doctrine and practice.

1372. *Why does the second epistle conclude thus:—"The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every letter"?*

Because in every case the epistles were written by an amanuensis, with the exception of an autograph postscript.—(Conybeare.)

1373. The apostle here gives the Thessalonians a caution against the spurious apostles who had crept in among them. They are to beware of fictitious letter-writers; they had been deceived by such. This deception he is anxious to remove, signing the present communication with his own hand, and sealing it with his own seal; for although the rest of the epistle had been written by another, these concluding words were written by himself.

1374. *Who was Timothy?*

He was a native either of Derbe or Lystra, cities of Lycaonia, and a distinguished disciple and fellow-labourer of St. Paul.

1375. His father was a Gentile, but his mother a Jewess. Her name was Eunice, and his grandmother's name was Lois. St. Paul commends their piety, and the good education they had given Timothy. When St. Paul came to Derbe and

Lystra, about A.C. 51 or 52, the brethren reported very advantageously of the merit and good disposition of Timothy, and the apostle elected to take him as a companion. He circumcised him at Lystra. Timothy applied himself to labour assiduously in the gospel, and did St. Paul very important services through the whole course of his preaching. It is not known when he was made bishop, but it is believed that he received very early the imposition of the apostle's hands, and this in consequence of a particular revelation or order from the Holy Ghost. (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6.) St. Paul names him not only his dearly beloved son, but also his brother, the companion of his labours, and a man of God, observing that there was none more united with him in heart and mind than Timothy.

He accompanied St. Paul to Macedonia, to Philippi, to Thessalonica, and to Berea, where he remained to confirm the converts. When at Athens, St. Paul sent for him to visit him there. He was afterwards sent to Thessalonica, and, generally speaking, accompanied his great master through the whole of his journeyings.

In the year 63, when St. Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, he tells them that Timothy was come out of prison; but he mentions no circumstances either of the imprisonment or of the delivery of this disciple.

It is thought that Timothy was the penmen of the chief part or nearly the whole of the epistle to the Hebrews. Some Greek copies hint as much, and it is expressly affirmed by the Syriac copies obtained by Dr. Buchanan from the Syriac Christians in India.

1376. *Why were the epistles to Timothy written?*

Because it was necessary for their author, being near his end by martyrdom, to leave some special directions to his disciple towards the correction of error and the government of the infant church.

1377. St. Paul wrote to Timothy the first of the two letters from Macedonia, A.C. 64 or 65. (1 Tim. vi. 23.) He recommends him to be moderate in his austerities, and to drink a little wine for his health's sake. After the apostle went to Rome, A.C. 65, being now near his death, he wrote to him his second letter, which is full of kindness and tenderness for this his dear disciple, and which is justly considered as the last will of St. Paul. He desires him to come to Rome to him before winter, and to bring with him several things that St. Paul had left at Troas. If Timothy went to Rome, as is probable, he must have been a witness there of the martyrdom of St. Paul, A.C. 66.—(Calmet.)

1378. *Why is it supposed that Timothy suffered martyrdom?*

Because the "*Acts of Timothy*," of which Photius has transmitted to us an abridgment, impart that on January 22, A.C. 97, the pagans of Ephesus made a great feast, in which they carried in procession the images of their gods, being masked and armed with great clubs; that Timothy rushed in among

them to prevent this idolatrous superstition, but they killed him with stones and with their clubs.—(Calmet.)

1379. *Who was Demas, mentioned* 2 Tim. iv. 10*?*

He was at first a zealous disciple of St. Paul, and very serviceable to him during his imprisonment; but some years afterwards (about A.D. 65) he forsook the apostle to follow a more secular life.

1380. He withdrew to Thessalonica, his native city. Epiphanius informs us that he renounced the faith, and embraced the heresy of Cerinthus, who held Jesus Christ to be a mere man. Dorotheus, in his Synopsis, says that he became an idolatrous priest at Thessalonica; others affirm that he recovered after his fall.

1381. *Who was Alexander the coppersmith?* (1 Tim. i. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 14.)

He was a great opponent of the apostles, a relapsed convert as is supposed, who was "delivered over to Satan" by St. Paul on account of blasphemy.

1382. *What is meant by the lion from which St. Paul speaks of being delivered?* (2 Tim. iv. 17.)

All commentators agree that by this lion is meant the Emperor Nero, from whose hands the apostle was unexpectedly delivered after his first imprisonment at Rome.

1383. *Why is Timothy exhorted to make "diligence to come before winter"?* (2 Tim. iv. 21.)

Because at that early period, when the art of navigation was in its infancy, it was usual to journey by sea in the summer and part of the spring and autumn only.

1384. At the approach of winter ships were usually taken to pieces, or drawn up upon the land. In illustration of this fact see Acts xxvii. and xxviii., for St. Paul's voyage from Palestine to Italy; see also Philp's "History of Progress," section *Navigation.*

1385. *Who was Titus?*

He was a disciple of St. Paul, a Gentile by religion and birth, but was converted by St. Paul, who calls him his son.

1386. St. Jerome says that he was St. Paul's interpreter, and this probably because he might write what the apostle dictated; or explain in Latin what St. Paul

St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon.

said in Greek; or render into Greek what St. Paul said in Hebrew or Syriac. He visited Jerusalem at the time of the dispute about circumcision. Some would have had Titus submit to the Jewish initiatory rite, but to this neither St. Paul nor Titus would consent. He was sent by the same apostle to Corinth towards the end of A.C. 56, on occasion of some disputes in the church. He was very well received by the Corinthians, and much satisfied with their ready compliance, but would receive nothing from them, thereby imitating the disinterestedness of his master.

From Corinth he went to *St. Paul* in *Macedonia*, and gave him an account of the state of the Corinthian church. (2 Cor. vii. 6, 15.) A little while afterwards the apostle desired him to return to Corinth, to regulate things against his own coming. *Titus* readily undertook this journey, and departed immediately (2 Cor. viii. 5, 16, 17), carrying with him St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. *Titus* was made Bishop of Crete about A.D. 63, when St. Paul was obliged to quite this island to take care of the other churches. (Tit. i. v.) The following year he wrote to him to desire him, that as soon as he should have sent Tychicus or Artemas to him to supply his place in Crete, Titus would come to him to Nicopolis in Macedonia, where the apostle intended to pass the winter. (Tit. iii. 12.)

1387. *Why was the epistle to Titus written?*

In order to convey to that disciple and bishop some directions and admonitions touching the ordination of ministers and the qualities that should be found in them.

1388. The subject of this epistle, written A.D. 64, is to represent to *Titus* the qualities of a bishop. As a principal function of *Titus* in the isle of Crete was to ordain priests and bishops, it was highly incumbent on him to make a discreet choice. The apostle also suggests the advice and instructions that he should give to all sorts of persons—to the aged, both men and women—to young people of each sex—to slaves and servants. He exhorts him to exercise a strict authority over the Cretans, and to reprove them with severity, as a people addicted to lying, idleness, and gluttony; and as there were many converted Jews in Crete, he exhorts Titus to oppose their vain traditions and fables; also the observation of the legal ceremonies, as no longer necessary; to show that the distinction of meats is abolished, and that every thing is pure and clean to those who are pure. He puts him in mind of exhorting the faithful to be obedient to temporal powers; to avoid disputes, quarrels, and slander; to apply themselves to honest callings; and to shun the company of heretics, after the first and second admonition.—(Calmet.)

1389. *Why was the epistle to Philemon written?*

In order to reconcile that eminent convert with his servant, or slave, Onesimus, who had absconded from Philemon's house at Colossæ and fled to Rome.

1390. The epistle was written by St. Paul when a prisoner for the first time in Rome, about the year 61. It contains, says St. Chrysostom, "divers profitable instructions and marks of the apostle's charity towards a poor fugitive servant." Erasmus says of this epistle:—"Cicero never wrote with greater elegance."

The house of Philemon at Colossæ had become a church, or was so considered on

account of the great facilities it offered for the assemblages of the Christian converts. At the time when St. Paul wrote this epistle, he was in full expectation of being set at liberty and of paying a visit to the Colossians. Hence the invitation (in verse 22) to Philemon to prepare a lodging for its author.

A modern writer with great aptness says:—"What a beautiful picture of the humanizing effects of the gospel does this epistle convey! Onesimus, bearing this letter in his hand, returns to his master. The apostle expresses a confidence that Philemon would enfranchise his slave out of regard to his Christian profession; yet he is willing to charge himself with the price of his liberty, as well as the compensating of any wrong done by Onesimus to Philemon. Not satisfied with this demonstration of his love for the new convert, St. Paul interposes the strongest personal considerations—'If you count me a partner in the work of the gospel, receive him as myself.' Onesimus is well received. His hopes are realized. The power of divine truth and love receives a striking and wonderful illustration. Such was the gospel in its origin."

The epistle contains but one chapter, yet it comprises an epitome of the whole spirit of the New Testament.

1391. *Why was the epistle to the Hebrews written?*

The main design of the epistle is to show that every one's justification and salvation is to be hoped for by the grace and merits of Christ, and not from the law of Moses.

1392. *Why is St. Paul's epistle to the Hebrews so called?*

Because it was written and addressed to those Christians in Palestine who had formerly been Jews.

1393. As St. Paul had shown in his epistles to the Galatians and Romans. To the former he had demonstrated that righteousness could not be obtained through circumcision and the ceremonies of the law; to the latter, that even the moral precepts and works of the law were insufficient without the grace of Christ. In this, to the Hebrew, St. Paul proves that righteousness is not to be obtained through the sacrifices of the old law.

1394. *Why were doubts for a long time held as to the authorship of this epistle?*

1. Because, contrary to his usual and the ordinary custom, St. Paul had not appended his name thereto. 2. Because it differs from his other epistles in style.

1395. St. Jerome says:—"The epistle which bears the title 'to the Hebrews,' is thought by some not to be St. Paul's, from the difference of style and phrase; but they judge that it was written by Barnabas, as Tertullian supposes, or by St. Luke, as others think; or else of Clement, afterwards bishop of Rome, who, as they say, compiling together the sayings and sentences of Paul, phrased them in his own style and manner. Or others, as some judge, because St. Paul writing to the Hebrews, on account of the odiousness of his name among that people, suppressed it in the first

entry of his salutation contrary to his accustomed practice, and as he wrote to the Hebrews, being himself a Hebrew, so he wrote in Hebrew—that is, his own tongue—the more eloquently; and this afterward was translated into more eloquent Greek than St. Paul was accustomed to write. And that is thought to be the cause why it differeth from his other epistles."

1396. *When and where was the epistle to the Hebrews written?*

St. Paul wrote this epistle about the year A. C. 63, and either at Rome or in some other part of Italy.

1397. This latter fact is deduced from Heb. xiii. 24—"Salute all that have the rule over you, and all the saints. *They of Italy salute you.*"

1398. *What are the principal contents of the Epistle to the Hebrews?*

From the first to the third chapters inclusively, the apostle exhorts the Hebrews to the belief in Christ, by showing his dignity and pre-eminence above the angels, and above Moses; from the fourth to the eighth chapter, that the priesthood of Christ was above that of Aaron; thence to the middle of chapter ten, that the new law and testament is preferable to the old; in the eleventh and twelfth chapters he commends faith, from the example of the ancient patriarchs; similar exhortations compose the rest of the book.

1399. *Why is the epistle to the Hebrews placed last in order among St. Paul's writings?*

1. Because it was the last written in point of time; and 2, because much disputation had arisen with respect to its authorship and canonicity.

1400. After a careful weighing of the arguments on both sides, the epistle was finally inserted in the canon of Scripture at the council of Carthage, A.C. 397.

1401. *Why is the general epistle of James so called?*

Because it was addressed, like several of the following epistles, not to any particular church or person, but to the general body of Christians throughout the world.

1402. *Why is the writer of this epistle termed "the lesser," or "St. James the Less"?*

Because he was the younger of the two apostles of that name, or the last called.

Epistles of Saints Peter and John.

1403. He is called the son of Alpheus. Alpheus is a Grecized form of the Aramaic Cleophas. Hence St. James the Less was the son of Mary the sister of Christ's mother, and the cousin of our Lord. He was one of the apostles, and was the first bishop of Jerusalem. This epistle was written about the year 62. *The chief contents are:*—1. To show the combined importance of faith and good works. (James i.) 2. An exhortation to patience, to ask for the divine gift of wisdom and of grace. 3. An unbridled use of the tongue is reprobated. 4. Admonitions against pride, vanity, ambition, etc. 5. Against disorderly desires. 6. The anointing of the sick with oil in the name of the Lord is ordered (James v. 14). 7. Exhortation to prayer.

This epistle is said by St. Augustine to have been written to refute the rising errors of Simon Magus, the Nicholaites, and other innovators. It is believed to have been composed in Greek, from the fact that the apostle quotes the Old Scriptures from the Septuagint version (as James iv. 6), and as this language was commonly spoken in the East by the dispersed Jews to whom he wrote. The style is concise and sententious, like that of Solomon in the Proverbs, and like the maxims of the Orientals even to the present day.

1404. *Why were the epistles of St. Peter written?*

They were written and addressed to the converts (principally from Judaism) scattered throughout Asia Minor and the adjacent countries, in order to confirm them in the faith, and to regulate some matters of discipline.

1405. Both epistles were written from Rome. From some expressions (2 Epis. i. 14) it would appear that their date was just previous to St. Peter's martyrdom, A.C. 68. The diction used is equally simple and dignified.

1406. *Why were the three epistles of St. John written?*

They would appear to have been written to confirm the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Incarnation of Christ; topics which had previously been largely treated of in the evangelical history of the same apostle. Besides which they enforce strongly the duty of love to God and our neighbour, and in this respect are in accordance with the received character of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

1407. They are considered to have been written about sixty-six years after our Lord's ascension. The first epistle does not appear to be addressed to any particular person. The second is addressed to one Electa, a lady of piety and charity; and the third epistle to Gaius, a friend and supporter of the infant churches.

1408. *Why does the evangelist John in his second epistle* (verse 11) *forbid a Christian to salute a man of another sect?*

Because from the nature of the ancient, and especially the

Oriental, methods of salutation, such a course would have carried an erroneous appearance, and would have possessed the very injurious effect of confounding distinctions and giving encouragement to heresy.

1409. The exhuberance and ardour of Eastern salutations have been already noticed (page 80). It may be added here, that the Hebrews were sometimes so animated in these ceremonials as to repeat not less than ten times the grasping of hands, and kissing, and the interrogations respecting each other's health. Of course a great portion of this ceremonial was thoroughly insincere, and so inconsistent with the Christian profession.

1410. *Why does St. John* (2 John i. 1) *call himself the elder?*

Because probably on account of his great age, St. John being the last survivor of the twelve apostles.

1411. The term elder was also used to designate the presiding minister or bishop of a particular church.

1412. *Why is the absence of the apostle John's name from the first of his three epistles no proof that he did not write it?*

Because it was rather a characteristic of the beloved disciple to omit the mention of his own name, as may be observed in the gospel according to St. John, where, when speaking of himself, he calls himself "the disciple."

1413. *Why was the epistle of St. Jude written?*

Because of certain heresies broached by the Simonians, Nicolaites, and Gnostics. The apostle condemns these innovators, and describes their doings in very strong terms, exhorting the faithful followers of Christ to contend earnestly for the faith first delivered to them, and to beware of false teachers.

1414. From a passage in verse 17, this epistle would seem to have been penned when all the apostles, except perhaps St. John, had "entered into their rest," for he speaks of the period at which he addresses his readers, as *the last time*, or *the latter days*, foretold by the other apostles.

In connection with the history of St. Jude, a very interesting account is given by Eusebius (Hist. Eccl., lib. iii. cap. 20) of the examination of two nephews of the apostle by the emperor Domitian, A.C. 95-96. It is as follows:—

"This Domitian feared the coming of Christ, as Herod did, and therefore commanded all in Jewry, who were known to be of the stock of David to be killed. There were remaining alive at that time certain of the Lord's kindred, nephews of

Jude, who was called our Lord's brother after the flesh. When the commissary had brought these up before Domitian, the emperor demanded of them whether they were of the stock of David. Which, when they had granted, he asked again what possessions and substance they had. They answered that they both had no more between them, in all, but nine and thirty acres of ground; and how they got their living and sustained their families with the hard labours of their hands; showing forth their hands unto the emperor, being hard and rough, worn with labours, to witness that to be true which they had spoken. Then the emperor inquired of them concerning the kingdom of Christ, what manner of kingdom it was, how and when it should appear? They answered, that his kingdom was no worldly nor terrene thing, but an heavenly and angelical kingdom, and that it should appear in the consummation and end of the world, what time He, coming in glory, should judge the quick and the dead, and render to every one according to his deservings. Domitian, the emperor, hearing this (as the saying is), did not condemn them, but despising them as vile persons, let them go, and also stayed the persecution against the Christians. They being thus discharged and dismissed, afterward had the government of churches, being taken for martyrs, and as of the Lord's kindred; and so continued in good peace till the time of Trajan."—(Foxe's translation.)

1415. *What was the book of Enoch quoted by the apostle Jude in his epistle?* (Verse 14.)

It is doubtful whether the words quoted in this epistle were taken from an actual writing then or formerly in existence, or whether a knowledge of them had been handed down to the apostolic days by tradition. Many ancient writers mention an apocryphal book of the prophecies of Enoch, yet St. John might know them from the immediate inspiration of God.

1416. This work is undoubtedly lost. Alleged copies of the book of Enoch exist at Paris and Rome. The book was never received into the canon, *i. e.*, among those about which no reasonable doubt exists, but has been ranked with the deutero-canonical or apocryphal books.

1417. *By whom was the book of Revelation written?*

By the apostle St. John, who, being banished by the Emperor Domitian to the island of Patmos, received these extraordinary communications from heaven, and wrote the book there.

1418. St. John's own account says that, being an exile for the truth of the gospel in the said island, the Revelations were made to him immediately from God, or immediately through angelic messengers, that he was directed to write them in a book, and to transmit them to certain persons or churches. In the first, second, and third chapters are contained the instructions and exhortations which St. John was commanded to write to the seven bishops (or angels) of the churches of Asia. The

remaining chapters contain prophetical matters referring to the afflictions of the Christian Church, and to the end of the world. The Revelations were written in Greek.

This sublime but mysterious book was very generally, if not universally ascribed to the apostle John during the first two centuries; and when this began to be questioned in the third century, it was evidently in consequence of certain erroneous explanations of particular parts which led to expectations, the disappointment of which disposed men for a time to doubt the authority of the predictions on which they had been founded. The doubts which were about this time entertained were however soon removed; and although the book was not publicly read in the early Christian churches, this was from its mysterious character, rather than from any doubt of the authority which it claimed.—(Kitto's "Pictorial Bible.")

1419. *Why have so many various interpretations been put upon the prophetical portions of the book of the Revelations?*

1. Because of the very dark and symbolical language in which it is couched. 2. Because of the great interest which such a book would naturally excite, referring, as it evidently does, to the end of the world—the final judgment—the state of the saints in heaven—the reprobate souls, etc., etc.

1420. With regard to the interpretation of the book of Revelation, St. Jerome says that it contains "as many mysteries as words, or rather mysteries in every word." (Epis. ad Paulm. t. 4, p. 574, edit. Benedict.) The connection of sublime and prophetical ideas, which comprise this work, has at all times been a labyrinth in which the greatest geniuses have lost themselves, and a rock on which most commentators have split, the great Sir Isaac Newton not excepted. Scaliger praises Calvin by saying, "He was too wise to write about the Revelation." However, there have been more dissertations written upon the subject than perhaps upon any other connected with the Scriptures. That the writers differ widely in their interpretations, can be a matter of no surprise, when it is seen that St. Jerome the compiler of the Vulgate, and Calvin, equally despair of affording a true solution.

1421. *Where is the island of Patmos, to which St. John was banished, and in which he received the "Revelation"?*

It is situate in the Icarian Sea, about thirty miles distant from the nearest part of the western coast of Asia Minor.

1422. It is at present called Patino. On account of its stern and desolate character, the Roman emperors made it a kind of penal settlement, or at least a place to which State criminals might be appropriately sent. To this island accordingly the apostle was banished by Domitian towards the end of his reign, or about the year A. C. 95. It is stated, upon the authority of Tertullian, that this banishment took place after the apostle had been miraculously delivered unhurt from a vessel of flaming oil, into which he had been cast.

The Revelation.

1423. *Why are the heads of the leaders of the seven churches designated angels?*

Because in the prophetic style everything is called an angel that notifies a message from God, or executes the will of God.

1424. Both the Hebrew and the Greek words signify messenger. But in the Scriptures a prophetic dream is called an angel (although occasionally we find that real manifest angels, that is, spirits in a partly human form, appeared). The pillar of fire that went before the Israelites is called God's angel. The winds and flames of fire are angels to us when used by God to teach us, or as rods to punish us. The angel of a nation denotes its king or ruler. The angels of the churches were no other than the ecclesiastical ministers set over them—whether bishops, priests, or elders. It is to be understood that the admonitions addressed to the angels of the seven churches applied to the members of those churches rather than, if at all, to the ministers.

1425. *Why is our Saviour called Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the end?* (Rev. i. 8, xxi. 6.)

Because the former, *alpha*, the first letter of the Greek alphabet, derived from *aleph* the first of the Hebrew alphabet, stands for one, or "the first;" *omega* is the last or concluding letter.

1426. Our Lord is called alpha and omega, which is equivalent to saying that he is the beginning and the end of both the divine dispensations. Besides this, the Hebrew aleph, A, signifies chief (Gen. xxxvi.), leader, guide, or conductor; a friend on whom reliance may be placed. Taking it in the former, which is the most general and usual sense, it applies very expressively to our Lord Christ. Moreover, as it is a thought after the Jewish manner, it forms one of the arguments for the "Revelation" being written by a person of that nation, as such a thought would not have occurred to a stranger who might have attempted the forgery.—(Calmet.)

1427. *Who was meant by "the angel of the Church of Ephesus?*

Timothy, St. Paul's disciple, was made first bishop of Ephesus by the apostle, who laid his hands upon him. If it be true that Timothy did not die till A. C. 97, it can scarcely be denied that he was the person to whom a reprimand is addressed. (Rev. ii. 1—5.)—(Calmet.)

1428. Bossuet says, "We must not suppose the faults which are reproved by St. John, to belong individually to Timothy, but to some members of the Ephesian church."

The Seven Churches.

Ephesus, a celebrated city of Ionia, in Asia Minor, was principally remarkable for its temple of Diana, the magnificence of which attracted an infinite resort of strangers. The coin of Ephesus annexed, is taken from Calmet. It represents the temple, or shrine of Diana, enthroned in her famous sanctuary. The style of the medal may give some idea of the craft of Demetrius, mentioned Acts xix. 24, who was a maker of silver shrines and images; models of this temple; and doubtless of other emblems attendant on her. With regard to the figure representing Diana, it will be observed that her head is surrounded with a glory; on its top is the modius whence issues a flower. She has many breasts, indicating the many nutritive powers of nature.

COIN OF EPHESUS.

1429. *Who were the Nicolaitanes* (*mentioned* Rev. ii. 6)*?*

They formed an infamous sect, who disturbed the rising church by the superstitions and all the impurities of paganism. (St. Aug. de Hæresib.)

1430. The Nicolaitanes were rather numerous in Asia during the first century. They claimed to be founded by Nicholas the deacon; but this person was a devout man, one of the first seven deacons of whom St. Stephen was one, and is not to be blamed for their malpractices. In opposition to the plain directions given by the first council at Jerusalem, they chose to eat meat that had been offered to idols, and were very lax upon the matter of fornication. It is true that they pretended to exorcise the meat, but fornicators were always forgiven eight days after the offence had been committed. The fathers universally looked upon the Nicolaitanes as libertines.

1431. *Who was the angel of the church of Smyrna?* (Rev. ii. 8—10.)

It is generally supposed to have been Polycarp (called St. Polycarp in the Martyrologies), who was made bishop of that church by the apostle John.

1432. The commendations given to the angel of the church of Smyrna agree with what is known otherwise of this great martyr, and it is observable that the

letter contains no reproach. Calmet adds, "There is some probability that the martyrdom of St. Germanicus and others of Smyrna, who suffered under Marcus Aurelius, was what St. John had in view when he says—*i. e.*, on the part of Jesus Christ—the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The situation of Smyrna is well known; it is a city of Asia Minor, on the Archipelago.

1433. *Who was the angel of the church of Pergamos?* (Rev. ii. 12.)

Eusebius says that this bishop's name was Corpas. He is commended in the text for his faithfulness, although his see is designated as Satan's seat.

1434. Pergamos was a considerable city of Troas, or the region wherein the ancient city of Troy had stood, or Phrygia. It is celebrated as the place where parchment was first made; hence the term *pergamena*. The Nicolaitanes were here in great force. The doctrine of these heretics is pointed out in verse 14, and compared with the sin of Balaam. (Num. xxiv. and xxxi. 16.)

1435. *Who was the Antipas mentioned, in connection with the church of Pergamos, as the "faithful martyr"?* (Rev. ii. 13.)

He was one of the first disciples of our Saviour; his "acts" relate that he suffered death by being burned in a brazen bull.—(Calmet.)

1436. *Who was the angel of the church of Thyatira?*

Opinions are divided upon this matter, and it cannot with any certainty be said who this person was.

1437. Thyatira was a city of Asia Minor. The term Jezebel is understood to denote figuratively a very wicked woman, who used her beauty and influence in connection with the Nicolaitanes to corrupt and pervert the faithful Christians of that church. Some very powerful arguments, if any are wanting, in favour of the divinity of Jesus Christ, are to be drawn from the verses addressed to the church at Thyatira. The attributes of the Son of God in verses 18, 19, are such as belong only to God himself. God alone is the searcher of hearts; He alone can give people "space to repent" (ver. 21). He alone can give the saints "power over the nations," "to rule them with a rod of iron," and to break opposing powers to atoms, "as the vessels of a potter" are broken to shivers.

1438. *Who was the angel of the church of Sardis?*

The bishop of this church is not known by name. There was a Christian writer of the name of Melito, who presided

over this church during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, about A.C. 170 or 175. The person above alluded to was most probably his predecessor.

1439. Why his name has not come down to us is probably due to the fact, that he did not merit any great commendation. His works were "not found perfect before God" (Rev. iii. 2). Sardis was a city of Asia Minor, formerly the capital of Crœsus, king of the Lydians.

1440. *Who was the angel of the church of Philadelphia?* It was most probably Quadratus, a disciple of the apostles, and the author of a written apology for the Christian religion, presented to the Emperor Adrian.

1441. There were several towns bearing the name of Philadelphia. This was a city of Mysia, in Asia Minor.

1442. *Who was the angel of the church of the Laodiceans?* It is not known at present what the name of this bishop was, and this is probably for the same reason that those of some others are not remembered, namely, that the bearers of them did not merit that distinction.

1443. There are several cities bearing the name of Laodicea. The one in question was of Phrygia, on the river Lycus, near Colossæ. Its ancient name was Diospolis, afterwards Rhoas. Lastly, Antiochus, son of Stratonice, rebuilt it, and called it Laodicea, from the name of his wife Laodice.

1444. *Why is the word "Amen" applied as a name or title to the Almighty?* (Rev. iii. 14.)

Because in Hebrew it signifies "true," "faithful," "certain." Christ here takes the title of "The Amen," as if he said, "I am the truth."

1445. *What is meant by "a book written within and on the backside"?* (Rev. v. 1.)

Books were then skins, membranes, or parchments; and when written on both sides part of the writing appeared, though they were rolled up.

1446. *Why was the book sealed with seven seals?* (Rev. v. 1.)

To signify that it contained mysteries and secrets of high importance.

Notes on the Revelation.

1447. According to Pliny, at Rome testaments were null and void without the testator's seal, and the seals of seven witnesses.

1448. *Why is it said that the number of the children of Israel saved, or signed with the mark of the Divine acceptance, was "a hundred and forty-four thousand"?* (Rev. vii. 4.)

Venerable Bede, in his commentary, thus explains the meaning of this passage:—

1449. "The number of one hundred and forty-four thousand is not to be taken in a literal and strict sense, but to express in general terms the great number of the elect; for it appears that the tribe of Dan, which must have produced some elect, is not mentioned, and the tribe of Joseph is put in lieu of that of Ephraim; so that if it be supposed that these numbers must be taken literally, the tribe of Joseph would have produced a double number to that of any other tribe, since Manasseh was his son, and the tribe of Dan would have produced none."

1450. *Why are the blessed in heaven represented as clothed in white garments?* (Rev. vii. 9.)

1. Because they denoted holiness and purity of life. 2. They were tokens of joy and pleasure. 3. In the prophetic style they indicated prosperity and success.

1451. Thus Pharaoh honoured Joseph by arraying him in vestures of fine linen. And in Rev. xix. 8, fine linen is interpreted to mean the righteousness of saints, as well as a mark of honour. The bride is said to be arrayed in it, "clean and white," in allusion to the custom of Eastern nations. It was used in the patriarchal times, also among both the Greeks and Romans. In the primitive church, persons, so soon as baptized, received new and white garments, in token of their being cleansed from all past sins, and as an emblem of that innocence and purity to which they had then bound themselves. They were called *candidati* from *candidus*, "white," and hence our English word candidate. These garments were worn for seven days (from Easter-day till the following Sunday, most commonly), and then laid up as an evidence against them if they ever revolted against their holy profession. Hence also to defile one's garments is to fall from one's baptismal vow and engagements.

1452. *Why is such frequent reference made to Babylon in the Revelation?*

Because under that term was implied the whole united power of opposition to Christ's Church until the end of time.

1453. That by Babylon is also meant pagan Rome most commentators agree. The first or literal Babylon was the beginner and supporter of idolatry and tyranny: first by Nimrod, or Ninus, and afterwards by Nebuchadnezzar; and therefore

she is by Isaiah accused of magical enchantments from her youth or infancy, *i. e.*, from her very first origin as a city or nation. This city and its whole empire were taken by the Persians under Cyrus. The Persians were subdued by the Macedonians (or Greeks), and the latter by the Romans; so that Rome succeeded to the power of old Babylon. Nor did she succeed to the power only; by adopting the idolatries of the conquered nations she added their sins to her own.

1454. *Why is Satan, in various parts of the New Testament, called "the prince of the power of the air"?*

Because the power of the air signifies that government and dominion which is exercised by evil spirits, who have their habitation assigned them in the air above us, and who are represented in Scripture as subject to one who is the head or prince over them, the author of their apostasy from God, and their leader in their rebellion against him.

1455. It was the opinion of Pythagoras that the air was full of souls or spirits. This opinion would have little weight with Christians; but the Jews also believed that, from the earth to the firmament, all things were full of these companies or rulers, and that there was a prince over them who was called the governor of the world, that is, of the darkness. Our Saviour endorses this opinion when saying to his apostles, in answer to their congratulations, that the evil spirits were subjected to them, "Rejoice not that the evil spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

1456. *Why does the Bible conclude with the word "Amen"?*

Because by that word is expressed a full and hearty concurrence with all that has gone before.

1457. AMEN is a Hebrew word which, when prefixed to an assertion, signifies *assuredly*, *certainly*, or emphatically *so it is;* but when it concludes a prayer, *so be it*, or *so let it be*, is its manifest import. In the former case it is *assertive*, or assures of a truth or a fact. It is an asseveration, and is properly translated *indeed*. In the latter case it is *petitionary*, and as it were epitomizes all the requests with which it stands connected. This emphatic term was used among the Hebrews by the whole congregation at once, and from St. Jerome we learn that a similar method prevailed with the early Christians.

NOTE ON THE REVELATION.

1458. Appended are some paragraphs elucidatory of a few of the phrases or symbolical expressions scattered over the concluding book of the New Testament. They will be found extremely interesting; for others the reader is referred to Daubuz's "Symbolical Dictionary," edited by Wemyss.

BOOK OF LIFE. (Rev. iii. 5.)

It is recorded among the military customs of the Romans, that "the names of those who died or were cashiered for misconduct were expunged from the muster-roll." Hence the words, "I will blot his name out of the book of life."

Supplementary Chapter.

THE WHITE STONE.

In Rev. ii. 17, it says, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone." The most ancient way among the Greeks of giving sentence in courts of judicature was by black and white pebbles; the black were for condemnation, the white for acquittal. The like was done in popular elections. Hence a white stone became the emblem of absolution in judgment, and of conferring honours and rewards.

THE WHITE HORSE. (Rev. vi. 2.)

"And I saw, and behold a white horse." White horses were formerly used in triumphal processions, or as tokens of victory. To see a white horse in reality, or even in a dream, was accounted a happy omen by both the Jews and Romans.—(Dr. Kitto.)

MARKS UPON THE FOREHEAD. (Rev. vii. 3.)

It was a custom traceable to the remotest antiquity to affix marks, either delibly or indelibly, upon the forehead. These marks are alluded to in Ezek. xi. 4, where the Almighty commands his angels to "go through the midst of the city, and set a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh for the abominations committed in the midst thereof." Among the Greeks and Romans, and in Eastern countries, the practice has always obtained. The Brahminical forehead markings are well known, probably the phylactery or parchment inscription worn on the forehead by the Pharisees were an amplification of this practice. With the decadence of the Jewish ceremonial the markings ceased, but among the primitive Christians it was customary to mark a cross with water (as in baptism) upon the forehead.

CHAPTER XII.

SUPPLEMENTARY.

1459. *What is meant by a father of the Church?*

The appellation is given to several of the most eminent among the early Christians, who, under the character of patriarchs, bishops, or doctors, were instrumental, under Divine providence, in establishing and consolidating the primitive church.

1460. *In what way did these primitive fathers conduce to the establishment of Christianity in the world?*

In various ways:—By witnessing, sometimes to death, to the truths they had received, either personally from the apostles

or indirectly from those who succeeded them; by combating and refuting heresies; by interpreting difficult portions of the sacred Scriptures; or by writing or compiling commentaries upon them.

1461. The chief of these fathers are as hereunder enumerated; they are not placed in a strict chronological order, but according to their relative importance.

1462. *Who was St. Athanasius?*

He was a native of Alexandria, in which city he was born about the year 296.

1463. His parents were heathens, but Alexander, the bishop of his native city, took him under his patronage, and carried him to the council of Nice, where he distinguished himself with such energy against the Arians, that on the death of his protector, in 326, he was chosen his successor, though no more than twenty-eight years of age. He had been greatly persecuted by the Arians before his consecration, and now their rage against him was redoubled, particularly as he refused to admit their leader into the church, though commanded to do so by Constantine. The Arians raised against him various false accusations, and at length succeeded in getting him banished. On the death of the emperor he returned to Alexandria, where he was received with great joy. But when Constantius came to the throne, the Arians renewed their persecutions, on which Athanasius fled to Rome, where Pope Julius espoused his cause, and by his good offices got him reinstated in his bishopric. At the end of Julian's reign he was driven again into exile, but on the accession of Jovian he was restored and continued to enjoy his seat unmolested till his death in 371.—(Watkin's Biog. Dic.)

Athanasius was an eminent instrument in maintaining the truth in an age when errors affecting the great foundations of our faith were urged with great subtilty. The Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, as explained by him, at length triumphed over the heretics, which at one time met with so much support and sanction; and the views of Athanasius have been received in substance by all orthodox churches to the present time.—(Biog. Univers.)

1464. *Who was St. Chrysostom?*

He was born at Antioch, about A.D. 344. He was of a noble family, and his father, whose name was Secundus, was a general of cavalry.

1465. The name of Chrysostom, which signifies golden mouth, he acquired by his eloquence. He has also been called the Homer of orators, and compared to the sun. Successful at the bar, for which he was educated, he quitted it to become for six years an ascetic. When he emerged from his retirement, he became a preacher, and gained such high reputation for his piety and oratorical talents, that he was raised to be patriarch of Constantinople, A.D. 398. At length he incurred the hatred of the empress Eudoxia, and was sent into exile, in which he died A.D. 407.

Supplementary Chapter.

1466. *Who was St. Augustine, or St. Austin?*

He was born at Tagasta, in Africa, in 354. His father was a plebeian, and his mother, Monica, a woman of exemplary piety.

1467. Though he had all the advantages of a good education he spent most of his early years in debauchery. In 371 his father sent him to Carthage, where he led the same dissipated life, and became a disciple of the Manichees.* In 380 he taught rhetoric at Carthage with great reputation, but still continued a disreputable life. His mother took uncommon pains to bring him back to virtue, but finding all her efforts ineffectual, she had recourse to prayer. Wearied with his situation in Africa, Augustin removed to Rome, where he taught eloquence with great applause, and in 388 was appointed professor of rhetoric at Milan. Here the sermons of St. Ambrose having effected a conversion, he renounced his heretical notions, and was baptized in 387. The next year he returned to Africa, and was ordained priest. He was at first coadjutor to Valerius, bishop of Hippo, and afterwards his successor. In the government of his diocese he was most exemplary, and he distinguished himself with great zeal against the Manichæans and Pelagians.† His controversies with the last procured him the title of doctor of grace. In 428 the Vandals, under Genseric, having invaded the country, Augustin was advised to fly; but he refused, and was carried off by a fever during the seige of Hippo in 430.

His writings have always been held in great veneration, and are the foundation of what is called scholastic divinity. Nor has his fame and esteem been confined to one nation or confession. They are the common property of the whole Christian world. His work on the City of God, and his Confessions, have often been translated.

1468. *Who was St. Ambrose?*

He was a native of France, having been born in 340 at Arles in Gallia Narbonensis, of which province his father was then lieutenant under the empire.

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* So called from Manes, the founder of the sect. He obtained the tenets that made his name famous from the books of Scythianus, an Arabian, who maintained two co-eternal principles, one good and the other evil. He jumbled various heresies together, and made a new one of his own out of them. He pretended to have miraculous powers of healing; but failing to cure the son of a certain king of Persia—as he had promised to do—he was by the truculent monarch flayed alive and his body given to the dogs, A.C. 278.—(Mosheim.)

† Pelagius, the originator of the heresy bearing his name, was a British monk, whose real name was Morgan, which he changed for the Greek equivalent Pelagius, meaning "born of the sea." In 400 he went to Rome, where he opposed Augustine on the subjects of *grace, original sin,* and *election.* The works written by him in defence of his views upon these subjects were condemned by the council of Carthage.—(Dupin.)

1469. He lost this parent at an early age, but his mother gave him a most excellent education, which he duly improved. While yet a youth he pleaded causes with so much eloquence as to be chosen by Probus, the prefect of Italy, one of his council. The same friend nominated him governor of Milan, where he conducted himself with great satisfaction five years, when a singular event occurred which completely altered his state of life. In 374 Auxentius, bishop of Milan, died, and so fierce was the contest in the election of a successor to the vacant see, that the governor was called upon to quell the dissension.

This he attempted by persuasion in the great church, and with such eloquence, that a voice from the crowd exclaimed, "Ambrose is bishop." The saying was scarcely uttered, than it reverberated through the whole building, on which Ambrose in great surprise retired. This circumstance, according to the spirit of the age, was considered as of divine direction, and Ambrose was declared to be the object not only of the popular choice, but of that of heaven.

After many struggles against it, Ambrose was under the necessity of yielding, on which he divided all his property between the Church and the poor. At that time Arianism* prevailed greatly under the protection of the Empress Justina, mother of young Valentinian; but the new bishop, unbiassed by fear or favour, opposed the heresy with the utmost firmness, nor would he suffer its professors to take possession of a church at Milan, though an imperial order to that purpose was sent with a military force to compel obedience. Ambrose was also much troubled with the Pagans,† who attempted to restore their former worship, in which they were successfully resisted by the Bishop of Milan. When Maximius invaded Italy, Ambrose, at the desire of the Empress Justina, endeavoured by his eloquence to put a stop to his progress, but in vain. Theodosius, however, was more fortunate by his arms, and succeeded in relieving Valentinian, who afterwards renounced the Arian heresy. At the beginning of the reign of Theodosius in the west, a circumstance occurred which diffused a brilliant splendour around the character of Ambrose. During the residence of that emperor at Milan, a tumult arose at Thessalonica, in which some of the imperial officers were slain. Theodosius hearing this, immediately ordered that a general massacre should take place at Thessalonica; of which Ambrose being apprised, he instantly repaired to the emperor, remonstrated with him on his barbarity, and prevailed on him to promise that the command should be revoked. Instead of this, however, the mandate was carried into execution, and seven thousand persons perished. Ambrose on this charged the emperor with being guilty of murder and a breach of faith, nor would he suffer him to enter the church till after a public penance, and signing a declaration that no warrant for capital judgments should be executed till thirty days had elapsed from the signing of it, in

* So called from Arius of Alexandria, the author, or at least the principal defender, of that species of heresy which denies the divinity of Jesus Christ. He was born and died in the fourth century.

† The word Pagan now first came into use. Pagans, or *pagani*, meant "dwellers in the villages," "country people." The great majority of the dwellers in towns and cities had, outwardly at least, embraced Christianity, but the ruder or less polished people were still under the dominion of the old heathenism. At the time of St. Ambrose, therefore, villager and heathen meant the same thing.

order that there might be time for reconsideration and mercy. St. Ambrose died in 397. The hymn "Te Deum laudamus," of his composition, has been universally adopted in the liturgies of the Church.—(Cave.)

1470. *Who was Origen?*

He was one of the fathers of the Church, born in 185, at Alexandria, and studied philosophy under Clemens Alexandrinus. Being persecuted by his diocesan, Demetrius, he went to Cæsarea, and afterwards to Athens. During the persecution of Decius, he was imprisoned and tortured. He died in 253.

1471. His great works are the Hexapla, Commentaries on the Scriptures, and a treatise against Celsus. In his Commentaries he is said to have indulged to an extreme his taste for allegory. Some of the doctrines advanced by him have been condemned—for instance, one asserting the pre-existence of souls. The most esteemed of his works is that against Celsus, an Epicurean philosopher of the second century.

1472. *Who was St. Cyril?*

He was a father of the Church, who flourished in the first half of the fourth century.

1473. He was born at Jerusalem, A.C. 315, ordained presbyter in 345, and after the death of Maximus in 350, became patriarch of Jerusalem. Being a zealous Trinitarian, he engaged in a warm controversy with Acacius, the Arian bishop of Cæsarea. His adversary accused him of having sold some valuable church ornaments, which he had indeed done; but for the laudable purpose of supporting the starving inhabitants of Jerusalem during a famine. Not satisfied with this, Acacius assembled a council at Cæsarea in 357, which took it upon itself to depose Cyril. But the council of Seleucia, held two years after, restored him to his see. The very next year Acacius, by his intrigues, succeeded again in deposing the patriarch: but he was again restored to his see by the emperor Constantius. Valens, the Arian emperor, on ascending the throne, deposed Cyril the third time; and it was not until after the death of Valens that Cyril was allowed to return to Jerusalem. He was confirmed in his see by the council of Constantinople, in 381, and filled it till his death in 386. Of his writings there remain twenty-three catecheses, written in a style of clearness and simplicity which are esteemed the oldest and best outline of Christian doctrine.

1474. *Who was St. Cyprian?*

He was bishop of Carthage, and was born A.C. 200, of a respectable family, and was for some years teacher of rhetoric in that city.

1475. His reputation in that office was great; but his habits were loose and expensive. At the age of 46 he was converted to Christianity; upon which he gave

his property to the poor, and reduced his living to abstemiousness. The Church in Carthage soon chose him a presbyter, and in 248, bishop. In this station he acquired an exalted character, and became the idol of both clergy and people. During the persecution under Decius he fled, but still exhorted his people to constancy in the faith. In 257, he was banished to Churubis, and the next year was beheaded. His only crime was preaching the gospel in his garden near Carthage. Cyprian is an eloquent writer, though with somewhat of the hardness of his master Tertullian. An explanation of the Lord's prayer by him, and eighty-one of his epistles are extant.

1476. *Who was St. Basil?*

Basil, called the *Great*, to distinguish him from other Greek patriarchs of the same name, was born in 329, at Cæsarea in Cappadocia. After having studied at Athens, he for a while taught rhetoric, and practised at the bar In 370 he was made bishop of Cæsarea, where he died in 379.

1477. He is the most distinguished ecclesiastic among the Greek patriarchs. His efforts for the regulation of clerical discipline, of the divine service, and of the standing of the clergy, the number of his sermons, the success of his mild treatment of the Arians and above all, his endeavours for the promotion of a holy life, for which he prepared rules, prove the extent of his influence. The Greek church honours him as one of its most illustrious patrons.

1478. *Who was St. Hilary?*

He was a father of the Church, born at Poictiers in France, and educated in the Pagan religion, which he renounced when grown up to years of judgment.

1479. In 355 he was made bishop of Poictiers, in which situation he distinguished himself by his zeal for the orthodox faith against the Arians; for which he was banished to Phrygia, where he continued four years, and employed himself in writing his books on the Trinity, and other works. On his return to France he continued to exert himself in vindication of the doctrines of the church, till his death in 367. The best edition of his works is that of Paris, folio, 1693. He is to be distinguished from Hilary, bishop of Arles, who died in 449.

1480. *Who was St. Irenæus?*

He was a native of Greece, and the disciple of Polycarp, by whom it is supposed he was sent into Gaul. He was at first a priest in the church of Lyons, and on the martyrdom of Pothinus, in 174, succeeded him in that bishopric.

1481. He had a disputation with Valentinus at Rome, and held a council at Lyons, in which the Gnostic heresy was condemned. Irenæus was a great lover of peace, and laboured to allay the controversy respecting the time of celebrating Easter. He was beheaded at Lyons in the persecution under Severus, about A.C. 202.

1482. *Who was St. Jerome?*

Jerome, one of the most learned and productive authors of the early Latin church, was born about 331, in Dalmatia, of wealthy parents, educated with care in literary studies, and made familiar with the Roman and Greek classics under the grammarian Donatus, at Rome.

1483. He did not escape the contaminating licentiousness of the capital; but his feelings were excited by the catacombs and tombs of the martyrs, and becoming inclined towards the Christian faith, he became acquainted with several of its preachers in Gaul, and on the Rhine, and was baptised before his fortieth year at Rome.

Having formed a high idea of the ascetic life, he retired in 374 into the deserts of Chalcis, where for four years he practised the severest mortifications, and applied himself to the most laborious studies. He now obtained ordination as presbyter of Antioch, went soon after to enjoy the instruction of Gregory Nazianzen at Constantinople; and at length proceeded to Rome, where his public exposition of the Scriptures procured him great favour. Many leading families protected him, and Marcella and Paula, two patrician ladies, were induced by him to devote themselves to religious and charitable works. In conjunction with them, Jerome founded a retreat at Bethlehem, where he died, A.D. 420.

His biblical labours are highly valuable. His Latin version of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew is the foundation of the Vulgate, and his commentaries contain much useful matter. He was the only one of the fathers who seems to have thoroughly studied the Hebrew, which he did, with the assistance of learned rabbins in Palestine. He engaged much in controversy; on which occasions he displayed great ability, a most extensive knowledge of the ancient languages, and a glowing and lively imagination, which gave attraction to his style, and rendered him the most distinguished writer of his time.

1484. *Who was Tertullian?*

He was the first Latin writer of the primitive church whose writings have come down to us; he was an African, and born at Carthage in the second century. His father was a centurion in the troops which served under the proconsul of Africa.

1485. Tertullian was at first a heathen, and a man of loose manners, as he himself owns in various parts of his works; but he afterwards embraced the Christian religion, though it is not known when, or upon what occasion. He flourished chiefly under the reigns of the emperors Severus and Caracalla, from about the year 194 to 216; and it is probable that he lived beyond the usual period allotted to man, since Jerome mentions a report of his having attained to a decrepit old age. There is no passage in his writings whence it can be concluded that he was a priest; but Jerome affirms it so positively, that it cannot be doubted. He had great abilities and learning, which he employed vigorously in the cause of Christianity, and against heathens and heretics; but towards the latter part of his life he quitted the church

to follow the Montanists. Error, however, says a modern ecclesiastical historian, is very inconstant, for Tertullian afterwards left the Montanists, and formed a sect of his own called Tertullianists, who continued in Africa till St. Augustine's time, by whose labours their existence as a distinct body was brought to a close. The time of his death is nowhere mentioned. The peculiar characteristic of Tertullian's mind appears to have been a gloomy austerity. He was very earnest, but his earnestness was pushed to severity, and led him to assertions and acts which were against prudence and reason.

1486. *Who was Justin, surnamed the Martyr?*

He was one of the earliest of the fathers of the Church, and was born at Neapolis, the ancient Sichem of Samaria. He was brought up in the Pagan religion, and after studying in Egypt, embraced the platonic system, from which, in the year 132, he was converted to Christianity.

1487. He continued to wear the dress of a philosopher after his reception into the Christian fold. At the beginning of the reign of Antoninus Pius, he visited Rome, where he wrote against the heresy of Marcion,* and presented his first "Apology" for the Christian religion to the emperor (Trajan), who in consequence of it adopted milder measures. Not long after this Justin went into the East, and at Ephesus he had a conference with Trypho, an eminent Jew, of which he has left an interesting account in his works. On his return to Rome he engaged in a controversy with Crescens, a philosopher; and he also presented another apology for Christianity to Marcus Antoninus Philosophus; but in this he was not so successful, as to its immediate results, as in the former. At the instigation of Crescens he was arrested and beheaded, A.C. 165.—(Dupin.)

1488. *Who was St. Gregory?*

There were two principal ecclesiastical writers and bishops of that name.

1. Gregory (Nazianzen) who was born in 324, at Nazianzem, in Cappadocia, of which place his father was bishop. He received an excellent education, which he improved at Athens, and here he formed an acquaintance with St. Basil, for whom he officiated some time as reader of rhetoric. On his return home he was ordained; soon after which he wrote poems to counteract the designs of Julian, who had prohibited the Christians from teaching youth.

* Marcion, a heretic of the second century, was born at Sinope, on the Euxine sea. His father was its bishop. He is called a mariner by Eusebius, but whether he followed the sea or not is uncertain. His life was far from regular, and his own father excommunicated him for seducing a young lady. Upon this he set up for a heretic, and a disciple of Cerdo, His principles were very similar to those of the Manichæans. (Page 318, note.)

1489. In 378 he went to Constantinople, where he was chosen bishop; which appointment was confirmed by Theodosius in 380. After filling this see some years, he resigned it, and returned to his native place, where he died in 389. His works have been printed in Greek and Latin, in two vols. folio.

2. Gregory (Nyssen), the brother of St. Basil, and bishop of Nyssa. He was a zealous defender of the orthodox faith against the Arians; for which he was deposed and banished by Valens. He still continued, however, to oppose that faction, and had a share in drawing up the Nicene Creed. He died in 396. His works were printed in 1615, in two vols. folio.

1490. *Who was Eusebius?*

He was an ecclesiastical historian, and is supposed to have been born at Cæsarea in 267. He took the surname of Pamphilus, from his friendship with that martyr, and received orders from Agapius, bishop of Cæsarea, whom he succeeded in 315. He had a considerable share in the disputes relating to Arius, whose cause he at first defended; but afterwards he assisted at the council of Nice, and subscribed the confession of faith drawn up by that assembly.

1491. He was also at the councils of Tyre and Jerusalem, by which last he was deputed to go on a mission to Constantine, who honoured him with many marks of his favour. He died in 338 or 340.

1492. *What was the origin of the Calendar?*

It was the pious custom of the early Christians to celebrate yearly the memory of the martyrs on the days on which they suffered. On that day the martyr was considered to be born to a life of glory and immortality, and, with respect to that second life, it was called the day of his birth. The different churches therefore were careful to preserve an exact account of the particular days on which the martyrs obtained the crown of martyrdom. The book which contained this account was called a Calendar.

1493. At first the Calendar contained the mention of the martyrs only; but in course of time, the confessors, or those who, without arriving at the crown of martyrdom, had confessed their faith in Christ, by their heroic virtues, were admitted to the same honour. The calendars were preserved in the churches. Various editions of the calendars were published. The most famous one is by Joseph Allemani, and is entitled *The Calendar of the Universal Church, illustrated with Notes.* The Calendar affixed to the "Common Prayer" is a compilation and abridgment from various foreign calendars.

THE END.

The attention of the Reader is directed to the following Specimen Pages of works by the Author of the BIBLICAL REASON WHY.

THE REASON WHY: GENERAL SCIENCE.

THE REASON WHY: NATURAL HISTORY.

THATS IT! OR, PLAIN TEACHING.

DICK & FITZGERALD,
No. 18 ANN STREET, NEW YORK.

"God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did see God."—PSALM LIII.

THE REASON WHY:

GENERAL SCIENCE.

CHAPTER I.

1. *Why should we seek knowledge?*

Because it assists us to comprehend the *goodness and power of God.*

And it gives us power over the circumstances and associations by which we are surrounded: the proper exercise of this power will greatly promote our happiness.

2. *Why does the possession of knowledge enable us to exercise power over surrounding circumstances?*

Knowledge enables us to understand that, in order to live healthily, we require to breathe fresh and pure air. It also tells us that animal and vegetable substances, undergoing decay, poison the air, though we may not be able to see, or to smell, or otherwise discover the existence of such poison. Knowing this, we become careful to remove from our presence all such matters as would tend to corrupt the atmosphere. This is only one of the countless instances in which knowledge gives us power over surrounding circumstances.

3. *Name some other instances in which knowledge gives us power.*

Knowledge of *Geography* and of *Navigation* enables the mariner to guide his ship across the trackless deep, and to reach the sought-for port, though he had never before been on its shores.

Knowledge of *Chemistry* enables us to separate or to combine the various substances found in nature. Thus we obtain useful and

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."—PROVERBS IX.

precious metals from what at first appeared to be useless stones transparent glass from pebbles, through which no light could pass; soap from oily substances; and gas from solid bodies.

Knowledge of *Medicine* enables the physician to overcome the ravages of disease, and to save suffering patients from sinking prematurely to the grave.

Knowledge of *Anatomy* and of *Surgery* enables the surgeon to bind up dangerous fractures and wounds, and to remove, even from the internal parts of bodies, ulcers and diseased formations that would otherwise be fatal to life.

Knowledge of *Mechanics* enables man to increase his power by the construction of machines. The steam-ship crossing the ocean in opposition to wind and tide, the railway locomotive travelling at 60 miles an hour, and the steam-hammer beating blocks of iron into useful shapes, are evidences of the power which man acquires through a knowledge of mechanics.

Knowledge of *Electricity* enables man to stand in comparative safety amid the awful war of the elements. Lightning, the offspring of electricity, has a tendency to strike upon lofty objects by which it may be attracted. By its mighty powers churches or houses may be instantly levelled with the dust. But man, knowing that electricity is strongly attracted by particular substances, raises over lofty buildings rods of steel communicating with bars that descend into the ground. The lightning, rushing with indescribable force toward the steeple, is attracted by the bar of steel, and conducted harmlessly to the earth. Man may thus be said to take even lightning by the hand, and to divert its destroying force by the aid of Knowledge. And in countless other instances "Knowledge is Power."

CHAPTER II.

4. *Why do we breathe air?*

Because the air contains *oxygen*, which is necessary to life.

5. *Why is oxygen necessary to life?*

Because it combines with the *carbon* of the blood, and forms *carbonic acid gas.*

"Be not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held with the bit and bridle."—PSALM XXXII.

6. *Why is this combination necessary?*

Because we are so created that the substances of our bodies are constantly undergoing change, and this resolving of solid matter into a gaseous form, is the plan appointed by our Creator to remove the matter called *carbon* from our systems.

7. *Why do our bodies feel warm?*

Because, in the union of *oxygen* and *carbon*, heat is developed.

8. *What is this union of oxygen and carbon called?*

It is called *combustion*, which, in chemistry, means the decomposition of substances, and the formation of new combinations, accompanied by heat; and sometimes by light, as well as heat.

9. *What is formed by the union of oxygen and carbon?*

Carbonic acid gas.

10. *What becomes of this carbonic acid gas?*

It is sent out of our bodies by the compressure of the lungs, and mingles with the air that surrounds us.

11. *Is this carbonic acid gas heavier or lighter than the air?*

Pure carbonic acid gas is the heaviest of all the gases. That which is sent out of the lungs is not pure, because the whole of the air taken into the lungs at the previous inspiration has not been deprived of its *oxygen*, and the nitrogen is returned. Therefore the breath sent out of the lungs may be said to consist of *air*, with a large proportion of *carbonic acid gas*.

12. *What is the composition of air in its natural state?*

It consists of *oxygen*, *nitrogen*, and *carbonic acid gas*, in the proportions of oxygen 20 volumes, nitrogen 79 volumes, and carbonic acid gas 1 volume. It also contains a slight trace of watery vapour.

13. *What is the state of the air after it has once been breathed?*

It has parted with about one-sixth of its oxygen, and taken up an equivalent of carbonic acid. And were the same air to be breathed

"A prudent man forseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished."—PROVERBS XXVII.

six times successively, it would have parted with *all* its oxygen, and could no longer sustain life.

14. *Is the impure air sent out of the lungs lighter or heavier than common air?*

At first, being rarefied by warmth, it is *lighter*. But, if undisturbed, it would become *heavier* as it cooled, and would descend.

15. *Why is it proper to have beds raised about two feet from the ground?*

Because at night, the bed-room being closed, the breath of the sleeper impregnates the air of the room with carbonic acid gas, which, descending, lies in its greatest density near to the floor.

16. *What are the chief sources of carbonic acid gas?*

The vegetable kingdom (as will be hereafter explained), the combustion of substances composed chiefly of carbon, the breathing of animals, and the decomposition of carbonic compounds.

17. *Is breathing a kind of combustion?*

It is. In the breathing of animals, the burning of coals, or of wood, or candles, &c., similar changes occur. The *oxygen* of the air combines with the *carbon* of the substance said to be burnt, and forms *carbonic acid gas*, which unfits the air for the purposes of either breathing or of burning, until it has been renewed by admixture with the air.

18. *What is carbon?*

It is one of the elementary bodies, and is very abundant throughout nature. It abounds mostly in vegetable substances, but is also contained in animal bodies, and in minerals. The form in which it is most familiar to us is that of *charcoal*, which is carbon almost pure.

19. *What is meant by an elementary body?*

An elementary body is one of those substances in which chemistry is unable to discover more than one constituent. For instance, the chemist finds that water is composed of *oxygen* and *hydrogen*. Water is therefore a *compound* body. But *carbon* consists of *carbon only*, and therefore it is called a simple, or elementary body.

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth."—PROVERBS XXVI.

20. *Why is it dangerous to burn charcoal in rooms?*

Because, being composed of *carbon* that is nearly pure, its combustion gives off a large amount of *carbonic acid gas.*

21. *What is the effect of carbonic acid gas upon the human system?*

It induces drowsiness and stupor, which, if not relieved by ventilation, would speedily cause death.

22. *What is the reason that people feel drowsy in crowded rooms?*

Because the large amount of carbonic acid gas given off with the breaths of the people, makes the air poisonous and oppressive.

23. *What other causes of drowsiness are there?*

The candles, gas, or fires that may be burning in the rooms where people are assembled. Three candles produce as much carbonic acid gas as one human being; and it is probable that one gas-light produces as much carbonic acid gas as two persons.

24. *Have people ever been poisoned by their own breaths?*

In the reign of George the Second, the Rajah of Bengal took some English prisoners in Calcutta, and put 146 of them into a place which was called the "Black Hole." This place was only 18 feet square by 16 feet high, and ventilation was provided for only by two small grated windows. *One hundred and twenty-three of the prisoners died in the night,* and most of the survivors were afterwards carried off by putrid fevers. Many other instances have occurred, but this one is the most remarkable.

CHAPTER III.

25. *What is oxygen?*

Oxygen is one of the most widely diffused of the elementary substances. It is a gaseous body.

26. *Why do persons who are walking, or riding upon horse back feel warmer than when they are sitting still?*

"Stand in awe and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still."—PSALM IV.

Because as they breathe more rapidly, the combustion of the *carbon* in the blood is increased by the *oxygen* inhaled, and greater heat is developed.

27. *Why does the fire burn more brightly when blown by a bellows?*

Because it receives, with every current of air, a fresh supply of *oxygen*, which unites with the *carbon* and *hydrogen* of the coals, causing more rapid combustion and increased heat.

28. *Why does not the oxygen of the air sometimes take fire?*

Because oxygen, *by itself*, is incombustible. The wick of a candle, which retains the slightest spark, being immersed in oxygen, will instantly burst into a brilliant flame; and even a piece of iron wire made red-hot, and dipped in oxygen, will burn rapidly and brilliantly. Oxygen, though non-combustible of itself, is the most powerful *supporter of combustion.*

29. *Why do we know that oxygen will not burn of itself?*

Because when we immerse a burning substance into a jar of oxygen, it immediately burns with intense brilliancy; but directly it is withdrawn from the oxygen, the intensity of the flame diminishes, and the oxygen which remains is *unaffected.*

30. *Why do we know that oxygen is necessary to our existence?*

Because animals placed in any kind of gas, or in any combination of gases, where oxygen *does not exist*, die in a very short time.

31. *Where is oxygen found?*

It is found in the air, mixed with *nitrogen;* in water combined with *hydrogen;* in the tissues of vegetables and animals; in our blood; and in various compounds called, from the presence of oxygen, *oxides.*

32. *Why is the oxygen of the air mixed so largely with nitrogen?*

Because *oxygen* in any greater proportion than that in which it is found in the atmosphere, would be too exciting to the animal

"As vinegar is to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to him that sent him."—PROVERBS X.

system. Animals placed in *pure oxygen* die in great agony from fever and excitement, amounting to madness.

33. *What is nitrogen?*

Nitrogen is an elementary body in the form of gas.

34. *Where is nitrogen found?*

It is chiefly found in the air, of which it constitutes 79 out of 100 volumes. It may be mixed with oxygen in various proportions; but in the atmosphere it is uniformly diffused. It is found in most animal matter, *except fat and bone.* It is not a constituent of the *vegetable acids,* but it is found in most of the *vegetable alkalies.*

35. *What are acids?*

Acids are a numerous class of chemical bodies. They are generally sour. Usually (though there are exceptions) they have a great affinity for water, and are easily soluble therein; they unite readily with most *alkalies,* and with the various *oxides.* All acids are compounds of two or more substances. Acids are found in all the kingdoms of nature.

36. *What are alkalies?*

Alkalies are a numerous class of substances that have a great affinity for, and readily combine with, *acids,* forming *salts.* They exercise peculiar influence upon vegetable colours, turning blues green, and yellows reddish brown. But they will restore the colours of vegetable blues which have been reddened by acids; and, on the other hand, the *acids* restore vegetable colours that have been altered by the *alkalies.* Alkalies are found in all the kingdoms of nature.

37. *Could animals live in nitrogen?*

No; they would immediately die. But a mixture of *oxygen* and *nitrogen,* in equal volumes, constitutes *nitrous oxide,* which gives a pleasurable excitement to those who inhale it, causing them to be merry, almost to insanity; it has, therefore, been called *laughing gas.*

38. *Why does nitrous oxide produce this effect?*

Because it introduces into the body more *oxygen* than can be consumed. It, therefore, deranges the nervous system, and being

"Lord, make me know mine end, and the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am."—PSALM XXXIX.

a powerful stimulant, gives an unnatural activity to the nervous centres and the brain.

39. *In what proportions are the atmospheric gases found in the blood?*

The mean quantity of the gases contained in the human blood has been found to be equal to 1-10th of its whole volume. In *venous* blood, the average quantity of *carbonic acid* is about 1-18th, that of *oxygen* about 1-85th, and that of *nitrogen* about 1-100th of the volume of the blood. In *arterial* blood their quantities have been found to be *carbonic acid* about 1-14th, *oxygen* about 1-38th, and *nitrogen* about 1-72nd.

40. *Then is nitrogen taken into the blood from the air?*

Such a supposition is highly improbable. It is probably derived from *nitrogenised food*, just as *carbonic acid* is derived from *carbonised food*.

41. *What is venous blood?*

Venous blood is that which is returning through the *veins* of the body from the organs to which it has been circulated.

42. *What is arterial blood?*

Arterial blood is that which is flowing from the heart through the *arteries* to nourish the parts where those arteries are distributed.

43. *What is the difference between venous and arterial blood?*

Venous blood contains *more* carbonic acid, and *less* oxygen and nitrogen than arterial blood.

44. *Will nitrogen burn?*

It will not burn, nor will it support combustion.

45. *What is the difference between "burning" and "supporting combustion?"*

Oxygen gas will not burn of itself, but it aids the decomposition by fire of bodies that are combustible. It is therefore called a *supporter of combustion*. But hydrogen gas, *though it burns of itself*

"As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife."—PROVERBS XXVI.

will extinguish a flame immersed in it. It is therefore said to be a body which will *burn*, but *will not support combustion.*

46. *What becomes of the nitrogen that is inhaled with the air?*

It is thrown off with the breath, mixed with *carbonic acid gas*, and flies away to be renewed by a fresh supply of oxygen.

47. *Where does nitrogen find a fresh supply of oxygen?*

In the atmosphere. Nitrogen is said to possess a remarkable tendency to *mix* with oxygen, without having a positive chemical *affinity* for it. That is to say, neither the *oxygen* nor the *nitrogen* undergoes any change by the union, except that of *admixture.* The oxygen and the nitrogen still possess their own peculiar properties. Oxygen and nitrogen are found in nearly the same proportions in all climates, and at all altitudes.

48. *In combustion does any other result take place besides the union of oxygen and carbon forming carbonic acid gas?*

Yes. Usually *hydrogen* is present, which in burning unites with *oxygen*, and forms *water.*

CHAPTER IV.

49. *What is hydrogen?*

Hydrogen is an elementary gas, and is the lightest of all known bodies.

50. *Will hydrogen support animal life?*

It will not. It proves speedily fatal to animals.

51. *Will hydrogen support combustion?*

Although it will burn, yielding a feeble bluish light, it will, if pure, extinguish a flame that may be immersed in it. Hydrogen will therefore *burn*, but will not *support combustion.*

52. *Why will hydrogen explode, if it will not support combustion?*

When hydrogen explodes it is always in combination with *oxygen.*

"As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God."—PSALM XLVI.

or with the common air, which contains *oxygen*. *Two* measures of hydrogen and *one* of oxygen form a most explosive compound.

53. *Why does hydrogen explode, when mixed with oxygen, upon being brought in contact with fire?*

Because of its strong affinity for *oxygen*, with which, upon the application of heat, it unites to form water.

54. *Where does hydrogen chiefly exist?*

In the form of *water*, where it exists in combination with *oxygen*. *Eleven* parts of hydrogen, and *eighty-nine* of oxygen, form water.

55. *Is hydrogen found elsewhere?*

It is never found but in a state of combination; united with oxygen, it exists in *water;* with nitrogen, in *ammonia;* with chlorine, in *hydro-chloric acid;* with fluorine, in *hydro-fluoric acid;* and in numerous other combinations.

56. *Is the gas used to illuminate our streets, hydrogen gas?*

It is; but it is combined with carbon, derived from the coals from which it is made. It is therefore called *carburetted hydrogen*, which means *hydrogen* with *carbon*.

57. *How is hydrogen gas obtained from coals?*

It is driven out of the coals by heat, in closed vessels, which prevent its union with *oxygen*.

58. *What becomes of the water which is formed by the burning of hydrogen in oxygen?*

It passes into the air in the form of watery vapour. Frequently it condenses, and may be seen upon the walls and windows of rooms where many lights or fires are burning. Sometimes, also, portions of it become condensed in the globes of the glasses that are suspended over the jets of gas. *A large volume of these gases forms only a very small volume of water.*

59. *What becomes of the carbonic acid gas which is produced by combustion?*

It is diffused in the air, which should be removed by adequate ventilation

"Nothing is foreign, parts relate to whole;
One all-extending, all-preserving soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least;
Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast."—POPE.

THE

REASON WHY:

NATURAL HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MAN.*

1. *What are the principal types of the varieties of the human race?*

The types generally recognized are those pointed out by Blumenbach, consisting of—1. The *Caucasian;* 2. The *Mongolian;* 3. The *Ethiopian;* 4. The *American;* 5. The *Malay.*

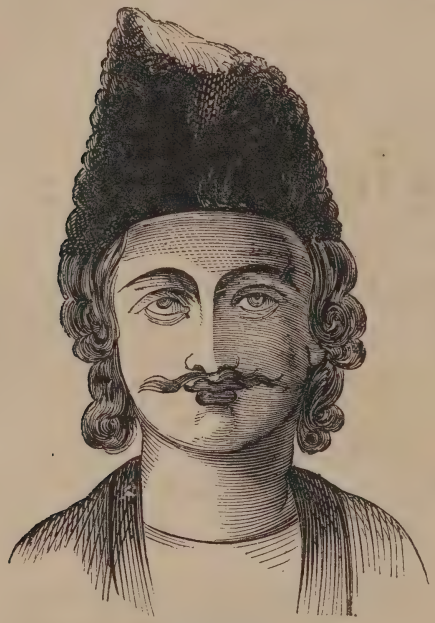
2. *Why is the first of these types called the Caucasian?*

Because the tribes from which this great division of the human family descended have for many ages been the occupants of the mountain chain of the *Caucasus.*

The characters of this variety are, a white skin, either with a rosy

* The chapter upon the Natural History of Man has been founded upon Johnson's Physical Atlas; Prichard's Physical History of Mankind; Lawrence's Lectures; Latham's Varieties of Man; The Encyclopædia Britannica, art. Man; and the concluding pages of Humboldt's Cosmos. For the subsequent chapters, a great number of authorities have been consulted, which are specified in the list of "Authorities."

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the great God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."—COLERIDGE.



CAUCASIAN.

tint, or inclining to brown; red cheeks; hair black, or of the various lighter colours, abundant, and more or less curled or waving; irides dark in those of brown skin; light blue, grey, or greenish, in the fair or rosy complexioned; large cranium with small face, the upper and anterior regions of the former particularly developed, and the latter falling perpendicularly under them; face oval and straight, with features distinct from each other; expanded forehead, narrow and rather aquiline nose, and small mouth; front teeth of both jaws perpendicular; lips, particularly the lower, gently turned out; chin full, rounded, and bearded.

In this type the moral feelings and intellectual powers are most energetic, being susceptible of the highest development and culture. It includes all the ancient and modern Europeans, except the Laplanders and the rest of the Finnish race.

The sub-divisions, or varieties of this type are—the Circassian, or true Caucasian; the Syro-Arabian: Hindoo, Celtic, Grecian, Italian, German, Slavonic, &c., and Gypsies, originally from the banks of the Indus, from whence they have wandered over Europe.

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man."—POPE.

3. *Why is the second of these types called the Mongolian?*

From the vast region of *Mongolia*, over which they are generally spread.

MONGOLIAN.

They are characterized by an olive colour, which in many cases is very light; black eyes; black, straight, strong, and thin hair; little or no beard; head of a square form, with small and low forehead; broad and flattened face, with the features running together; nose small and flat; cheeks projecting; eyes placed very obliquely; slight projection of the chin; with the ears large and lips thick. The stature, particularly in the countries within the Arctic circle, is inferior to that of Europeans.

The sub-divisions of this type are the true Mongols, the Tibetans, Chinese, Burmese, Siamese, Samoeids, Yeniseians, Finns, Lapps, Esquimaux, Turks, &c. These tribes occupy Central and Northern Asia, the Asiatic Islands, and the Arctic coasts of Asia and America.

4. *Why is the third type denominated the Ethiopian?*

Because the primitive tribes were the occupants of *Ethiopia*, or the country of the *dark skinned*, the ancient name of Africa. The

"Be not of us afraid,
Poor kindred man! thy fellow-creatures, we
From the same Parent power our being drew,
The same our Lord, our laws, our great pursuit."—THOMSON.

NEGRO.

Ethiopian embraces the African central tribes and their varieties, the *Negroes* of Western Africa, and the *Kaffirs* of the south. The *Central Africans* are marked by an elongated, narrow cranium, crisp and curly hair, projecting jaws, thick lips, and black or dusky skin. In the *Negro* the skull is narrow, or compressed at the sides, and elongated from front to back, the dome arched and dense, the forehead convex, retreating, and narrow; the contour of the head is smooth compared with the angular form of the *Mongol*; the cheek bones project forward; the bridge of the nose is small and flat, the nostrils round and wide; mouth wide with thick lips; hair crisp and woolly, except the eyebrows and eyelashes; beard scanty on the upper lip, and chiefly confined to the point of the chin; body strong, muscular, and symmetrical; feet broad and heavy, and the soles flat. In the *Kaffir* the cranium rises higher, and is more rounded than in the Negro; the cheek bones project, the eyes are small and dark, the eyelids occasionally oblique, the face tapers towards the chin, and the jaws are much less prominent than those of the Negro.

5. *Why is the American type so called?*

Because it includes the aboriginals of the American continent,

"Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude."—THOMSON.

AMERICAN—WOMAN.

which, though distributed over wide latitudes, and exhibiting considerable diversity of form, have a general physical aspect which is common to the whole. The cheek bones are high, the forehead rather low and retreating; the nose prominent, not unfrequently aquiline; jaws powerful, mouth large, lips full, eyes small, deep-set, and black; hair coarse, black, and rather scanty, beard scanty. Skin of a red copper colour, and glossy in some North American tribes, and of a yellowish-red, light brown, and sallow hue in the various tribes of South America. This type includes all American aborigines except the Esquimaux, which are Mongolian.

6. *Why is the fifth type called the Malay?*

Because most of the tribes speak the Malay language, which, in the various ramifications of this race, may be traced from Madagascar to Easter Island in the South Pacific, half-way between Asia and America. The characteristics of this type are a brown colour, varying from a light tawny tint, not deeper than that of the Spaniards and Portuguese, to a deep brown, approaching to black; black hair, more or less curled, and abundant; head rather narrow; bones of the face large and prominent; nose full and broad towards

'Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,
And all they bleed for as the summer's dust
Driven by the whirlwind."—YOUNG.

the point, and mouth large. To this division belong the inhabitants of the peninsula of Malacca, of Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Celebes, and the adjacent islands of Australia, Van Dieman's Land, New Guinea, New Zealand, and the numberless islands scattered throughout the South Sea.

MALAY.

7. *Why have the primitive types retained their characteristic features chiefly in mountainous countries?*

Because the stream of immigration naturally takes place in the direction of rivers, by which the tribes of the plains become mixed and changed; but mountains are less accessible, and frequently form almost impenetrable boundaries. We therefore find among mountaineers the remnants of the oldest races.

8. *Why are there so many different complexions in the tribes composing the various types?*

The problem has occupied the attention of philosophers and divines in all ages. The result of their investigations shows that no single cause, but a variety of causes, must be considered. The most important of them are, 1, climate; 2, organization; 3, intermarriage; 4, exceptional circumstances. The influence of *climate* is shown by the fact that every zone is more or less marked by a distinctive colour. Black prevails under the equator, copper colour under the tropics, olive and fair towards the poles.

"'Tis vain to seek in man far more than man,
Though proud in promise big in previous thought,
Experience damps our triumphs."—YOUNG.

The influence of *organization* is shown in many instances: the Moors, who have lived for ages under a burning sun, still have white children, and the offspring of Europeans in the Indies have the original tint of their progenitors. Different complexions are in some cases intermixed by immigrant races, and white and black people dwell together; and complexions are modified by the offspring of marriages between members of the different races. But it is further and most conclusively demonstrated by an examination of the skins of the darkly-coloured races, in which a secreted colouring matter is found. The skin is thicker and harder in black people than in white. The external skin of each is transparent and colourless. The colouring matter of the coloured races lies in the *rete mucosum*, or inner skin, and this colour is seen through the transparent *true skin*, just as white people see the traces of their dark veins through the same cuticle. The influences of *intermarriage* are abundantly demonstrated by the fact that the union of black and white parents generally produces children of an intermediate character, which are called *mulattoes;* and of *exceptional circumstances* in the less frequent occurrence of the birth of pie-bald negroes, having their skin diversified with black and white spots, and part of their woolly hair white; of short parents producing very tall children, &c.

9. The change of colour in the human skin, from exposure to sun and air, is well known to be temporary. The discoloration which we term "tanning," or being "sun-burnt," as well as the spots called "freckles," are most incidental to fair skins, and disappear when the parts are covered or no longer exposed to the sun. The children of the husbandman or of the sailor whose countenance bears the marks of other climes, are just as fair as those of the most delicate and pale inhabitants of a city.

10. *What imparted to various tribes the different habits and modes of life for which they are remarkable?*

Chiefly the physical features of the countries in which they were born, or into which they wandered. The people who established themselves in the frozen regions of the north not finding enough of vegetable nourishment, became *hunters and fishers.* Necessarily separated from each other for the pursuit of sustenance, they multiplied slowly,

"So from the first eternal order ran,
And creature link'd to creature man to man."—POPE.

and civilization remained unknown. Among such people the arts are confined to the construction of huts, the preparation of skins for covering, and to the manufacture of spears and other weapons. The inhabitants of the northern and eastern parts of Siberia, and the savages of North America, are almost the only people who are now to be found in this primitive state. Those people who feed numerous herds of cattle, in localities where it was necessary to seek new pastures for their maintenance, necessarily adopted a *wandering life.* Travelling in numbers, they acquired ideas of property and of mutual rights; and inequality of condition soon gave one man power over another. But the wandering life in search of new pastures and more agreeable climates, kept them still within very narrow limits of civilization. The Laplanders in the north of Europe, the Tartars, who inhabit the vast region in the interior of Asia, the Bedouin Arabs, who occupy the sands of Arabia and the north of Africa, and the Caffres and Hottentots in Southern Africa, are the principal wandering tribes that still remain. In countries where the nature of the soil and the value of the productions rendered an abiding residence essential, people took to *agriculture,* acquired property in land, developed themselves into classes, instituted laws, became less predatory and warlike; and when, in the division of labour and duty, the functions of the civilian became separated from those of the soldier, the civil portion of society cultivated various improvements and assumed the habits of civilized men.

11. *What is the chief physical distinction between man and the inferior animals?*

The *brain* of man is proportionally much larger, and the jaws are much shorter than in any other being. The brain, by its great extent, forms the protuberance of the occipital bone, the forehead, and all that part of the head which is above the ears.

In the inferior animals the brain is so small that most of them have no occiput, and the front is either wanting or but little raised. Man combines by far the largest cranium with the smallest face;

"To man she gave, in that proud hour,
The boon of intellectual power."—MOORE.

and animals deviate from these relations in proportion as they increase in stupidity and ferocity.

12. *Why may we feel assured that all the varieties of man sprung from one original?*

Because we have, first, the Scriptural history of man's creation; and, secondly, scientific investigations entirely support the unity of man's origin.

Whilst attention was exclusively directed to the extremes of colour and of form, the result of the first vivid impressions derived from the senses was a tendency to view these differences as characteristics, not of mere varieties, but of originally distinct species. The permanence of certain types in the midst of the most opposite influences, especially of climate, appeared to favour this view, notwithstanding the shortness of the time to which the historical evidence applied. But the many intermediate gradations of the tint of the skin and the form of the skull, which have been made known by the rapid progress of geographical science in modern times; the analogies derived from the history of varieties in animals, both domesticated and wild; and to the positive observations collected respecting the limits of fecundity in hybrids.

So long as the western nations were acquainted with only a part of the earth's surface, partial views almost necessarily prevailed; tropical heat and a black colour of the skin appeared to be inseparable. When the first Portuguese navigators sailed for purposes of discovery to the shores of Africa, it was confidently predicted by learned men of the time that if ever they returned they would be as black as the negro race.

When we take a general view of the dark coloured African nations, and compare them with the natives of the Australasian Islands, and with the Papuas and Alfourous, we see that a black skin, woolly hair, and negro features, are by no means invariably associated.

13. By maintaining the unity of the human species, we at the same time repel the cheerless assumption of superior and inferior races of men. There are families of

"Happy the man who sees a God employed
In all the good and ill that chequer life!"—COWPER.

nations more readily susceptible of culture, more highly civilized, more ennobled by mental cultivation than others; but not in themselves more noble. All are alike designed for freedom; for that freedom which in rude conditions of society belongs to individuals only, but, where states are formed, and political institutions enjoyed, belongs of right to the whole community. "If," in the words of Wilhelm von Humboldt, "we would point to an idea which all history throughout its course discloses, as ever establishing more firmly and extending more widely its salutary empire—if there is one idea that contributes more than any other to the often contested, but still more often misunderstood, perfectibility of the whole human species, it is the idea of our common humanity; tending to remove the hostile barriers which prejudices and partial views of every kind have raised between men; and to cause all mankind, without distinction of religion, nation, or colour, to be regarded as one great fraternity, aspiring towards one common aim, the free development of their moral faculties. This is the ultimate and highest object of society; it is also the direction implanted in man's nature, leading towards the indefinite expansion of his inner being."

CHAPTER II.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN FRAME — THE BONES, MUSCLES, TENDONS, LIGAMENTS, NERVES, ETC.

14. *Why is the position of the human face exactly adapted to the erect attitude?*

Because in that posture the plane of the orbits is nearly horizontal; the cavities of the nose are in the best direction for inhaling odours proceeding from before or from below them; the jaws do not project in front of the forehead and chin. If the posture were changed, as painful an effort would be required to examine an object in front of the body as is now necessary to keep the eyes fixed on the zenith, and the heavens would be almost hidden from our view; the nose would be unable to perceive any other odours than those which proceeded from the earth or from the body itself; and the teeth and lips would be almost useless, for they would scarcely touch an object on the ground before the forehead and chin were in contact

"Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles;
At once the head, the heart, the tongue of all,
Crown the great hymn!"—THOMSON.

with it; while the view of that which they attempted to seize would be obstructed by the nose and cheeks.

15. *Why is a horizontal posture unfitted for the human body?*

Because if man were to attempt such a posture he would be compelled to rest on his knees, with his thighs bent towards the trunk; an attempt to advance them would be painful, and with his legs and feet would be immoveable and useless. Or, he must elevate his trunk on the extremities of his toes, throwing his head downwards, and exerting himself very forcibly at every attempt to bring forward the thighs by a rotary motion at the hip-joint. In either case, the only useful joint would be that at the hip, and the legs would be scarcely superior to wooden or rigid supports.

16. *Why is the variation of animal bodies most common in the centre, whilst towards the extremities there is comparative uniformity?*

Because the central parts, as the skull, spine, and ribs, are in their offices permanent; whilst the extremities, as the hands and feet, are adapted to every exterior circumstance. In *all* animals the office of the cranial part of the skull is to protect the brain, that of the spine to contain the spinal marrow, and that of the ribs to perform the part of respiration. It is unnecessary, therefore, for these parts to vary in shape, while their offices remain the same. But the shoulder, on the contrary, must vary in form, as it does in motion, in different animals; so must the shape of the bones and of the joints more distant from the centre be adapted to their various actions, and the wrist, the ankle, and the bones of the fingers and toes must change more than all the rest, to accommodate the extremities to their diversified offices.

17. *Why cannot a statue stand upright on its feet without support, although it may be a model of symmetry in all its parts, and is placed in that attitude which is the most adapted to man?*

Because a statue has but one centre of gravity, and when that

" What if the foot, ordained the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspired to be the head ? "—POPE.

is so shifted as that the perpendicular through it to the centre of the earth falls in any way without the base of the statue—that is, without a figure formed by lines joining all the external points of the feet upon which the statue rests—the statue must necessarily fall to the earth with all the passiveness of a mass of matter of any other shape. The human body, on the other hand, has a *muscular feeling of the centre of gravity*, in consequence of which, if that centre inclines so much on one side that the position is beginning to become unstable, the motions and flexions of the limbs instantly shift the centre of gravity, or rather shift the attitude of the body, so as to accommodate it to that centre.

18. The centre of gravity in the body is somewhere in the height of it, varying a little with the form ; and if this centre is kept in the perpendicular, the body will always maintain the position of the greatest stability, whatever may be the flexures or motions of the other parts; or the centre of gravity may move so as to be over any one point in the base and yet be stable, only the stability will always be less the nearer that the body is to one side of the base, and the farther it is from the opposite side. The number of positions which the body can assume while on the same base of the two feet is almost beyond the power of arithmetic ; and as the positions of the feet themselves may be also greatly varied, the command which we have of the body by means of our power of working it upon its centre of gravity is truly wonderful.

19. *Why is the sole of the foot arched ?*

Because by this arrangement the weight of the body is made to fall on the summit of the arch, which is supported by a strong ligament, and this method of support, as is demonstrated by bridges and other buildings, is the strongest and most secure that can be devised.

20. *Why is the human hand the most important member of the whole body ?*

Because it is the hand which gives the power of execution to the mind ; and it is the relative position of one of the fingers to the other four which principally stamps the character of the hand ; for the thumb, by its capability of being brought into opposition with each of the other fingers, enables the hand to adapt

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul."—POPE.

itself to every shape, and gives it that complete dominion which it possesses over the various forms of matter.

21. *Why is the hand divided into several parts?*

Being thus constructed the hand is capable of applying a portion or the whole of its functions, according to the size, form, and weight of the object it designs to handle.

22. Thus the smallest things we take up with the tips of our fingers; those which are a little larger we take up with the same fingers, but not with the tips of them; substances still larger we take up with three fingers, and so on with four or all the five fingers, or even with the whole hand; all which we could not do were not the hand divided, and divided precisely as it is.

23. *Why are the hands made equal to and inclined towards each other?*

Because when bodies of a great weight and large size are to be grasped on opposite sides, it is necessary that the instruments which lift them should be capable of this combined action.

24. *Why are the extremities of the fingers soft and round?*

If they had been otherwise formed, or made of bone instead of flesh, we could not then lay hold of such minute bodies as thorns or hairs. For, in order that a body may be firmly held, it is necessary that it be in some degree enfolded in the substance holding it; which condition could not have been fulfilled by a hard or bony material.

25. *Why are the fingers of an unequal length?*

This difference in the length of the fingers serves innumerable purposes in connection with the arts and ordinary operations of life; thus a pen, a pencil, a brush, an engraving tool, a sword, a hammer, &c., may be more securely grasped, and used with greater facility; for if the fingers were of an equal length, one would get in the way of the other, and prevent the whole from performing their office properly.

"Man! know thyself. All wisdom centres there:
To none man seems ignoble, but to man"—YOUNG.

26. *Why are the palms of the hands and the insides and tips of the fingers guarded by cushions of skin?*

If it were not for this protection, the strain upon the blood-vessels and nerves would be too great, and the texture even of bones and muscles would not be able to sustain the demand made upon them.

27. *Why are the fingers furnished with nails?*

If the fingers were not thus furnished, the flesh would be forced out of its position and incapable of supporting hard substances; the assistance of the nails is also necessary in retaining minute objects which would otherwise elude the grasp.

28. The nails are applicable to many other purposes, and in polishing and scraping, in tearing and peeling off the skins of vegetables and animals, and in almost every act where nicety of execution is required.

29. *How are the nails of the hands and feet formed?*

The nails are a part of the scarf skin, and present the same phenomena of adaptation to the surface of the sensitive skin, but in a more striking manner. The portion of sensitive skin which gives support to the nail is formed into very delicate longitudinal folds, which stand up perpendicularly to the surface. The nail upon its under surface is fashioned into thin vertical plates, which are received between the folds of sensitive skin; and in this manner the two kinds of laminæ reciprocally embracing each other, the firmness of connection of the nail is maintained.

30. If we look on the surface of the nail we see an indication of its structure in the alternate red and white lines which are there observed; the former of these correspond with the sensitive laminæ, the latter with the horny plates, and the ribbed appearance of the nail is due to the same circumstance. These sensitive laminæ are provided with an unusual number of blood-vessels for the formation of the nail, and hence they give a red tint to that portion under which they lie; but nearer the root of the nail, there is a part which is not laminated, but merely ridged longitudinally, and is less abundantly supplied with capillary vessels. This latter part consequently looks pale if compared with the preceding. The root of the

"Vast chain of being! which from God began,
Natures etherial, human, angel, man."—POPE.

nail is embedded in a fold of sensitive skin to the depth of about a twelfth part of an inch for the fingers and toes, about the eighth part of an inch for the thumb, and the sixth of an inch for the great toe.

31. *What are the papillæ?*

Papillæ are the terminations of the nerves on the surface of the skin, soft and pulpy, and forming minute protuberances, resembling the nap of frieze cloth, though greatly inferior in magnitude. These nerves are a species of animal feelers, and are the immediate instruments of sensation.

32. When examining or enjoying any object, it is natural to enquire, What are the changes produced in the nervous papillæ or organs of sensation? If an object possessed of agreeable feeling is perceived, the nervous papillæ instantly extend themselves, and from a state of flaccidity become comparatively rigid. When a person in the dark inclines to examine any object, in order to discover its figure or other qualities, he perceives a kind of rigidity at the tips of his fingers. If the fingers are kept long in this state the rigidity of the nervous papillæ will give him a kind of pain or anxiety, which is caused by the over distention of the papillæ. If a small insect creep upon a person's hand, when the papillæ are flaccid, its movements are not perceived; but if he happen to direct his eye to the animal, he immediately extends the papillæ, and feels distinctly all the motions of the insect.

33. *Why is the cuticle slightly rough, instead of being perfectly smooth, as might be hastily considered its most appropriate characteristic?*

Because the slightly rough surface endows it with a quality more adapted to convey sensation. An illustration of this truth is furnished by the imperfect sense of touch which contact with polished surfaces affords, as compared with the handling of rough bodies.

34. A provision for increasing friction is especially necessary in some parts of the skin. Thus the roughness of the cuticle in the palm of the hand, and in the sole of the foot, gives us a firmer grasp and a steadier footing. Nothing is so little apt to slip as the thickened scarf-skin, either of the hand or the foot.

35. *Why has the skin a purple hue when exposed to cold?*

Because the vigour of the nervous power is reduced by cold; and in addition to the repulsion inward of most of the blood contained within the vessels of the skin producing pallor, that which remains

"Know, Nature's children, all divide her care,
The fur that warms a monarch, warmed a bear."—POPE.

behind moves so languidly through the capillaries, that the change from bright red to deep black red has time to be established before it completes its circuit and reaches the veins.

36. *Why is fat necessary to the system?*

Its principal uses are mechanical. It surrounds the organs like an elastic cushion, so as to protect the more delicate parts from sudden and injurious shocks. The soles of the feet, for example, upon which the whole weight of the body rests, and which in locomotion are subject to frequent concussion and pressure, are protected by a cushion of fat, which breaks the shocks which would otherwise take place between the foot and the ground, in the same manner as do the buffer-cushions which are placed between the carriages of a railway train.

37. There is another physical quality in fat which renders it of considerable utility in the animal economy. It is nearly a non-conductor of heat, and as it is generally collected in a superficial stratum investing the organs, it prevents the undue escape of heat, and keeps the body warm; it thus performs the part of a blanket or clothing, and it is found accordingly that fat persons are less chilly than thin persons.

38. *Why does hair form so appropriate a covering for the head?*

The hairs by their number and the manner in which they are disposed, are well adapted to deaden any strokes which may fall on the head, and to prevent strong pressure from wounding the skin. Being bad conductors of heat, they form a sort of felt, whose meshes intercept the air, and by that means preserve a uniform temperature in the head, to a certain degree, independent of that of the air and of surrounding bodies; besides, being impregnated with an oily matter, the hair imbibes but a small quantity of water, and very soon dries.

39. *Why is the human body soft and round in youth, and hard, unequal, and angular in advanced life?*

Because the softness and roundness of form of the human body is

"There closely braced,
And neatly fitted, it compresses hard
The prominent and most unsightly bones,
And binds the shoulders flat."—COWPER.

owing to the greater proportion of fluids to that of solids; the younger the age the greater the preponderance of fluids. The human embryo when first perceptible is almost wholly fluid; solid substances are gradually but slowly superadded, and even after birth the preponderance is strictly according to age: for in the infant the fluids abound more than in the child; in the child more than in the youth; in the youth more than in the adolescent; in the adolescent more than in the adult; and in the adult more than in the aged.

40. The fluids are not only more abundant than the solids, but they are also more important, as they afford the immediate material of the organization of the body; the medium by which its composition and decomposition are effected. They bear nourishment to every part, and by them are carried out of the system its noxious and useless matter.

41. *Why is the spinal column flexible?*

This flexibility renders the movement of the body free, easy, and varied, and accommodating to the complex combination of motion which may be brought into play at any moment, with the rapidity of the changes of thought, and at the command of the impulses of feeling. If the spinal column were composed of a rigid and immoveable pile of bones, all the other parts of the body, to which they are directly or indirectly attached, would have been rendered stiff and mechanical in their movements, and would not have been able to move, save in a given direction.

42. The degree of flexibility which the spinal column possesses, and the extent to which, by the cultivation of it, it is sometimes actually brought, is exemplified in the positions and contortions of the posture-master and the tumbler. It is acquired by means of the compressible and elastic matter interposed between the several vertebræ. So compressible is this substance that the human body is half-an-inch shorter in the evening than in the morning, having lost by the exertions of the day so much of its stature; yet, so elastic is this matter that the stature lost during the day is regained by the repose of the night.

43. *Why are all the bones of the body covered with a delicate coating, termed periosteum, except the teeth?*

Had so exquisitely sensitive a membrane as the periosteum

> "In human works, though laboured on with pain,
> A thousand movements scarce our purpose gain;
> In God's one single can its ends produce;
> Yet serves to second too some other use."—POPE.

invested the teeth, as it invests every other bone of the body, action, necessary exposure, and irritation would have subjected the animal to continual pain. General as it is, it was not the sort of integument which suited the teeth; what they stood in need of was a strong, hard, insensible defensive coat, and exactly such a covering is given to them, in the ivory enamel which adheres to their surface.

44. *Why are the front teeth of the mouth sharp and the back teeth broad and blunted?*

Because the office of the former is to cut and separate the food; while the purpose of the latter is to grind it to a pulp, by which it becomes fitted for the process of digestion.

45. *What are the uses, distinct and mutual, of the bones and muscles?*

The bones are to the body what the masts and spars are to a ship—they give support and the power of resistance. The muscles, again, are to the bones what the ropes are to the masts and spars; it is to them that the bones are indebted for the preservation or the change of their position. If the bones or masts are too feeble in proportion to the weight which they are required to sustain, then a deviation from their shape or position takes place; and, on the other hand, if the muscles or ropes are not sufficiently strong and well braced, then insufficiency of support must necessarily result.

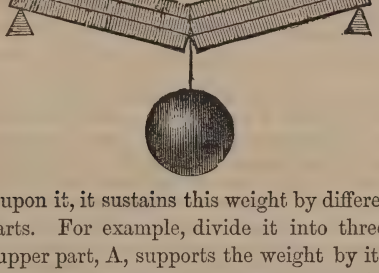
46. Early infancy affords an instance of both of the above-mentioned imperfections, the bones being infirm, and the muscles small and destitute of true fleshy fibres. The disease called "Softness of the bones," is an illustration of what may be called a weak mast of the body, which must yield if its muscles be strongly drawn. The state of muscular debility consequent on fever and many acute diseases, or even on sudden fright, is, on the other hand, an instance of the inability of the bones alone to preserve an attitude or execute motion, when the muscular system is weakened by disease.

47. *Why is the cylindrical form of the long bones of the body advantages to structure of the human frame?*

The superior advantages of this arrangement are illustrated

"The man who consecrates his hours
By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death."—YOUNG.

as follows:—If a piece of timber supported on two points, thus—



bear a weight upon it, it sustains this weight by different qualities in its different parts. For example, divide it into three equal parts, A, B, C; the upper part, A, supports the weight by its solidity and resistance to compression; the lowest part, B, on the other hand, resists by its toughness or adhesive quality. Between the portions acting in so different a manner, there is an intermediate, neutral, or central part, C, which may be taken away without materially weakening the beam, which shows that a hollow cylinder is the form of strength.

48. *How is it that the joints of the body undergo so much use for many years without diminution of their action?*

This durability is attributable to the provision which is made for preventing wear and tear, first, by the polish of the cartilaginous surfaces; secondly, by the healing lubrication of the mucilage, and in part to that astonishing property of animal constitutions, assimilation, by which in every portion of the body, let it consist of what it may, substance is restored and waste repaired.

49. The union of joints even where no motion is intended or required, carries marks of mechanism and mechanical wisdom. The teeth, especially the front teeth, are one bone fixed in another, like a peg driven into a board. The sutures of the skull are like the edges of two saws clapped together in such a manner as that the teeth of one enter the intervals of the other. We have sometimes one bone lapping over another, and planed down at the edges; sometimes, also, the thin lamella of one bone re-curved into a narrow furrow of another. In all of which varieties we discover the same design; namely, firmness of junction without clumsiness of seam.

"Each night we die,
Each morn are born anew: each day a life
And shall we kill each day? If *trifling* kills,
Sure *vice* must butcher."—YOUNG.

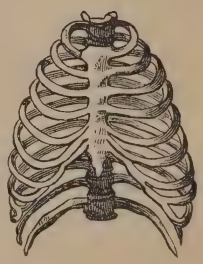
50. *How are the strength and lightness of the human body preserved independently of the bones?*

By the pressure of the atmosphere, consequent on the air-tight character of the bag formed by the synovial membrane (which secretes the oily fluid of the joints), and which is of itself more than sufficient to keep the articulating surfaces of the bones in contract.

51. This admirable fact is most readily demonstrated by the hip-joint. The round head of the thigh-bone is received into a socket, thus constituting what is familiarly known as a ball-and-socket joint; and all communication between the cavity of the joint and external fluids is cut off by the synovial membrane. The power thus exercised by the atmosphere is about one-fifth greater than would be necessary to support a limb weighing thirty pounds, and the barometer would require to fall twenty-five inches to place the limb and the atmosphere in exact equilibrium. The pressure of the atmosphere on the shoulder joint is capable of supporting a weight nearly twice that of the arm, and the force thus exercised upon the elbow-joint, knee-joint, and highest joint of the fore-finger are respectively six times, nine times, and thirty-five times greater than are requisite for the support of the fore-arm, leg, and finger.

52. *What is the structure of the ribs?*

The ribs are a frame of bones which enclose a hollow space. The lungs and heart are within them. The ribs are fastened in front to a bone called the breast-bone, and are joined at the back to the backbone. In front, the rib-bones are joined to the breast-bone by gristle, and this gives them a certain amount of flexibility, and enables them to move more easily when the lungs fill with air.



53. *Why is the skull the only cavity in the body that is not enclosed by a membrane?*

Because the importance of the brain to life, and the extreme tenderness of its substance, make a solid case more necessary for it than is required for any other part. The skull also completely surrounding its contents, is calculated not for motion, but solely for defence.

"Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore."—POPE.

54. *Why are persons remarkable for their stupidity commonly termed "thick-headed?"*

The bones of the cranium which are in connection with those of the face, require to increase proportionately in their growth, so as to keep pace with the face, and preserve the symmetry of the parts. This they do, however, only in their external table, the internal remaining to preserve the symmetry of the bones of the cranium. From this inequality of development, spaces are left between the two tables termed sinuses. In the forehead, immediately under the eye-brows, there are two such named frontal sinuses. It sometimes happens that the brain shrinks from disease, as in idiocy. In such cases the internal table follows the brain, and the distance between the two tables is increased, the intervening space being either filled with a kind of refuse, or remaining empty, forming unusually large sinuses.

55. A female child about four months after birth was noticed to have an unusually large head. Till the fourth year, however, it did not excite much attention, and the mental powers up to this period seemed to be excited in the ordinary degree. At this period, however, the head began rapidly to enlarge, and the mind became more and more obscured, till complete idiocy supervened, and continued till her death, which occurred in her twenty-second year. The head became too large to be supported by the puny muscles of the neck; she therefore constantly lay on a pallet by the side of the fire. She appeared to have some slight glimmerings of mind, was readily amused, like a young child, with noise and brilliant objects, and for years kept rubbing a penny piece in her hands, which she would not part with day or night, and which became at length reduced to the thinness of a wafer.

56. *What purposes are served by the projection of the heel and the prominence of the knee-pan?*

They increase by mechanical adjustment the power of the muscles; for by such means the point of insertion of the muscles is removed to a distance from the centre of motion in the joint, and the lever power thus obtained is greatly increased.

57. *Why is it, that although the bones are designed for the strengthening and support of the frame, yet they never touch each other?*

Because were it not for the fine elastic material, the cartilage, interposed between the bones, the frame would be deprived of its

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful is man."—YOUNG."

elasticity. Without such elasticity, a jar would reach the more delicate organs, even in the very recesses of the body, at every violent motion ; and every joint would crack by the attrition of the surfaces of the bones.

58. *What is a muscle?*

A muscle is composed of long slender fibres, which possess the power of contracting, and are everywhere enveloped in common cellular membranes ; the fibres become fewer as they approach the extremity of the muscle, and ultimately terminate. The cellular substance that envelopes them being thus freed from the muscular fibres, joins more closely together, and forms itself into a white, round, or flattened tendon. When the muscular fibres contract, their power is united on the tendon, and drawing it up, makes it perform the action of a pulley.

59. Different muscles accomplish very different purposes. Some of them draw down the limb or part to which they are attached, if it has a moveable joint, and is placed under the part of the body in which it acts. Others elevate and extend the moveable parts to which they belong, and are placed on the superior surface. Some muscles, also, move on the parts obliquely, as the oblique muscles of the eye, and others make them describe a semi-circle, as in the motions of the neck, arms, legs, &c. ; some elevate the upper eyelids ; others contract them, as the eyebrows ; or wrinkle them, as the extremities of the lips. The muscles also act on the legs, arms, fingers, toes, &c., in moving them to either side. Another example of their power is instanced in the forearm, legs, &c. The beauty of the mechanism of the muscles is also evinced in the abdomen, where some are transverse, others straight, oblique, &c.

60. *What are the nerves?*

They are a species of fine thread running from every part of the body, charged with exquisite sensibility, by which they convey the impression or commands between our will and our muscles.

The vital power of a muscle resides in the nerves, and is nervous. Its irritable power is the property by which it feels and acts, when stimulated without consciousness. It is an inherent principle belonging to its constitution, and remains some time after death. Ligaments and tendons support the same weight, whether dead or alive ; but a living muscle that lifts one hundred pounds with ease, cannot, after death, raise twenty pounds without danger of rupture. When a muscle is newly cut from a limb, it palpitates and trembles for a considerable time—it cannot be nervous power that thus makes it irritable ; for the nerves being separated from their organ, are

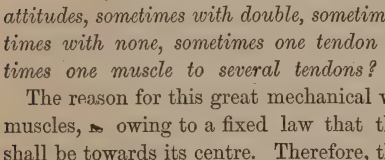
"Look round our world; behold the chain of Love
Combining all below, and all above."—POPE.

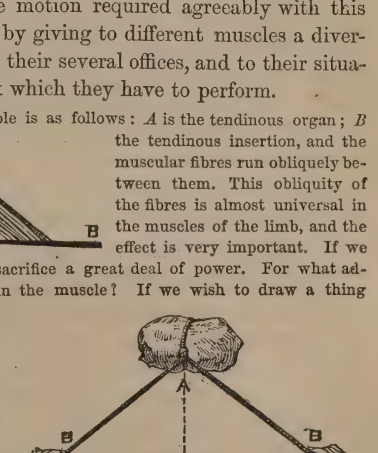
dead and powerless. If the heart is newly separated from the body, it contracts if irritated. The bowels continue their peristaltic motion after death, until they become stiff and cold. This quality belongs absolutely to the muscle, and exists, in some cases without nervous irritability altogether—hence, there is a distinction between nervous sensibility and muscular irritability. The former dies immediately with the animal; the latter lives for a short time after the animal is dead. Muscles are irritable and contractile by the inherent principle of their fibres, and are sensible by the vitality communicated through their nerves. Though nerves are sensible, they are not contractile, and cannot perform the functions of muscular fibres.

61. *Why do we find muscles under a multiplicity of forms and attitudes, sometimes with double, sometimes with treble tendons, sometimes with none, sometimes one tendon to several muscles, at other times one muscle to several tendons?*

The reason for this great mechanical variety in the figure of the muscles, is owing to a fixed law that the contraction of a muscle shall be towards its centre. Therefore, the object for mechanism on each occasion is so to modify the figure and adjust the position of the muscle as to produce the motion required agreeably with this law. This can only be done by giving to different muscles a diversity of configuration suited to their several offices, and to their situation with respect to the work which they have to perform.

62. The illustration of this principle is as follows: *A* is the tendinous organ; *B* the tendinous insertion, and the muscular fibres run obliquely between them. This obliquity of the fibres is almost universal in the muscles of the limb, and the effect is very important. If we pull obliquely upon a weight, we sacrifice a great deal of power. For what advantage, then, is power resigned in the muscle? If we wish to draw a thing towards any place with the least force, we must pull directly in the line between the object and the place; but if we wish to draw it as quickly as possible, without any regard to the loss of force, we must pull it obliquely by drawing it in two directions at once. Tie a string to a stone A, and draw it straight towards you at C with one hand; then make a loop on another string, and running the first





"Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot wheels;
How heavily we drag the load of life;
Blest leisure is our curse."—YOUNG.

through it, draw one string in each hand, B, B, not towards you in the line A, C, but sideways, till both strings are stretched in a straight line: you will see how much swifter the stone moves than it did before when pulled straightforward. Now this is proved by mathematical reasoning to be the necessary consequence of forces applied obliquely; there is a loss of power but a great increase of velocity. The velocity is the quality required to be gained.

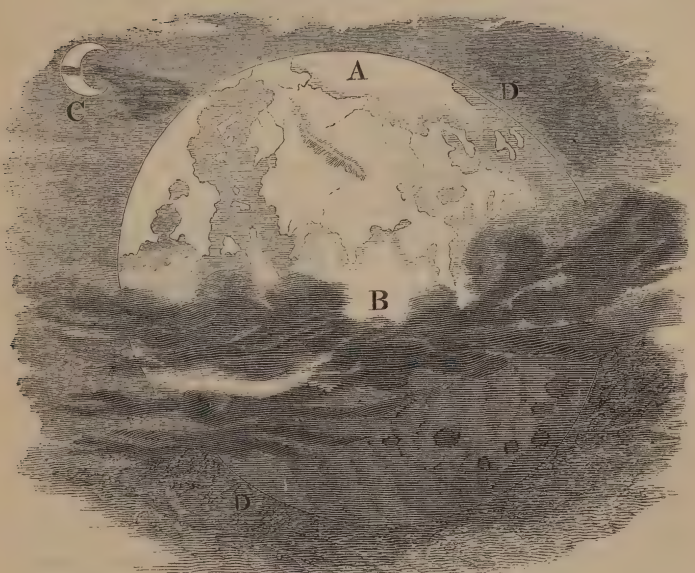
63. *By what mechanism are the motions of the arm performed?*

The arm is joined to the body, and moved by numerous powerful muscles; and is fixed to the breast by the ligaments of the collar-bone. The muscles that move the shoulder-blade lie upon the trunk; those that move the arm lie upon the shoulder-blade; those that move the fore-arm lie upon the arm; and those that move the hand and fingers lie upon the fore-arm. But as the arm requires easy, circular motions, it has a multiplicity of parts to perform them. It has the wrist, for turning it round; the elbow, for its hinge-like motions; and the shoulder-joint, on which it rolls; and to assist all those, the moveable shoulder-blade becomes the centre of their motions; for, after a certain point of elevation, the motion of raising the arm is performed by the action of the shoulder-blade upon the trunk; when our shoulder-bone is raised to a horizontal position, it is checked by the upper part of the shoulder-joint which hangs over it; and if we elevate our arm still higher, the shoulder-blade rolls, turning upon the point of the collar-bone; and, as it turns, it glides easily upon those muscles, which lie like a fleshy cushion between it and the trunk over which it is placed.

64. *Why are the muscles often removed by means of slender strings from the parts they are designed to rest upon?*

Because, in many cases, the situation of the muscles where they are immediately required would be inconvenient. If the muscles which move the fingers had been placed in the palm or the back of the hand, they would have swelled that part to an awkward and clumsy thickness; the beauty and the proportion of the part would have been destroyed. They are, therefore, disposed in the arm, and even up to the elbow, and act by long tendons strapped down at the wrist, and passing under the ligaments to the fingers and to the joints of the fingers which they are severally to

THE EARTH.



100.

EXPLANATIONS.—The *letters* A, B, C, D, etc., refer to the *details* of the large engraving which commences each chapter or subject. The *figures*, beginning with 100, refer to the *subjects* to which they are attached *as a whole*; the *figures* 1 to 20 refer to certain *minute details* necessary to the illustration of the *immediate text*. Thus the *number* 100 (on this page) refers to the large illustration of the earth, clouds, and moon, *as a whole*; the *letters* A, B, C, D, point to certain *details*. The *figures* 103 refer to the illustration of *land and sea*; but the figures 3 and 4 refer, specifically, the first to *sea*, the second to *land*. A *double reference*—thus, 6-104—means the *detail* 6 in *illustration* 104. By this simple method, many thousands of instructive references will be made in the volume. The *Index* to the volume will be also a *Glossary*, and will explain all *technical* and *scientific* terms unexplained in the text.

THE EARTH, A, is one of an unknown number of *planetary bodies*, 1. The *form* of the earth is *globular*, but not quite *round*, being flattened at *the poles*, D D. The *diameter* of the earth, measured at its middle, or the *equator*, is 7,926 (nearly 8,000) miles; its *circumference* about 24,900 (nearly 25,000) miles; its *surface* is estimated to amount to 198,943,750 (nearly 200,000,000) square miles. It is surrounded by a *transparent gaseous body*, called, when spoken of in a comprehensive sense, *the atmosphere;*

1

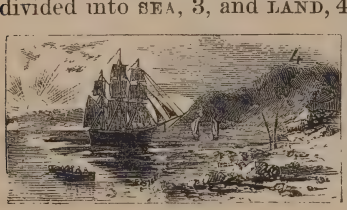
101.

in a minor, or local sense, *air*. This *atmosphere* is estimated to extend *forty-five* miles from the earth's surface. Clouds, B, gather in the atmosphere. They are *chiefly* formed of *vapours*, 2,

102.

raised from the *waters* and *land*, by the *heat of the sun*. The earth, A, has a *satellite*, C, which is the *moon*. The mean *distance* of the *moon*, C, from the earth, A, is 237,000 miles; her *diameter* is 2,160 (more than two thousand) miles. The mean distance of the earth from the *sun* is 95 millions of miles.

The surface of the earth is divided into SEA, 3, and LAND, 4.



103.

THE CALM.

The waves are asleep! sweetly calm is their rest,
The pearl-beds of ocean are silently press'd;
The crimson-wing'd light, from the western sky beaming,
O'er the slumbering waters is brilliantly gleaming;
The Nautilus floats like a fairy along.
No sound, save the mariner's love-burthen'd song,
Or the soft curfew-bell, meets the listening ear—
The earth and the heavens to each other draw near

The *sea* covers nearly *three-fourths* of the *globe*. When the *atmosphere* is still, the sea is *calm*, 3; but when *heat* or *cold*, by disturbing the equilibrium of the *atmosphere*, causes it to move, it forms *winds*, and communicates motion to the *sea*, producing what are called *waves*, 5. *Wind*, travelling at the rate

104.

THE BREEZE.

The waves are awaking, their myriads rise,
The rays of the morning illumine their eyes;
Their crests are all white, and their voices begin
To speak of the battle, with murmur and din;
They are woo'd by the winds, and the troth of the pair
Was never excell'd by the loves of the fair.
There are legions advancing, and legions have gone,
And legions unnumber'd ride carolling on.

of from *four to eight miles an hour*, produces a *breeze*, 6, 7, 8; at *sixteen miles an hour* it becomes a *gale*, 9; at *thirty-six miles an hour*, a *high gale;* at *sixty miles*

105.

THE STORM.

The waves they are raging, their fury is high,
They leap in their wrathfulness up to the sky;
They lash the wild shore, and an echoing moan
Is heard where the sway of the ocean is known.

The barque which so proudly hath triumph'd before,
Is seiz'd by the surges, and dash'd on the shore;
And the caverns laugh out with a terrible glee,
As the mariner sinks 'neath the conquering sea.

an hour, a *storm;* at *ninety miles an hour*, a *hurricane;* and, if accompanied by *lightning*, 10, and other stormy phenomena, it constitutes a *tempest*, 11.

11

106.

THE GROUND SWELL.

The waves are lamenting the deeds they have done,
Their proud heads droop down, though the battle they've won;
They are stealing along, with a murmuring roll,
Like the sighings of grief that burst forth from the soul!
Around the torn wreck their deep wailings are heard,
With the sorrowful cry of the storm-beaten bird:
And sad is the requiem sung by the waves,
Where the mariner sleeps in the gloom of the caves.

The *sea* is also liable to various *uncommon phenomena*, such as *whirlpools*, 12, which are caused by *currents of the sea* rushing with great force against *oceanic mountains*, or other obstacles; or by *two strong currents* meeting and causing each other to *whirl round*. These whirling currents form a *watery gulf*, 13, into the centre of which *boats* and even *ships*, 14, are sometimes drawn and sunk. Some *whirlpools* are *permanent*, and depend upon the mingling of periodical currents or tides. The one called *Euripedes*, near the coast of Greece, alternately receives and returns waters *seven times* in twenty-four hours; *Charybdis*, in the

12

107.

straits of Sicily, *thrice* in twenty-four hours. In the great whirlpool, called the *Mälstrom*, upon the coast of Norway, *whales*, 15, and large fishes have been drawn, and have been unable to extricate themselves. For six hours this vortex of waters draws into its gulf everything that comes within its influence, and the next six hours casts up the fragments of the wrecks it has made. The roaring of the waters of the *Mälstrom* may be heard many miles distant. Another disturbance of the sea is caused by *water-spouts*, 17, created by *whirlwinds*, which are themselves produced by the meeting of *two violent currents of wind*. Sometimes these *water-spouts* are very dangerous, being as much as *two hundred feet* in diameter; but such large ones are rare. They

are frequently destroyed by *firing guns*, 18, which, producing a dis-

108.

turbance of the air, *checks the whirling*, and disperses the *waterspouts*. The sea is also liable, as in the Mediterranean, to dis-

109.

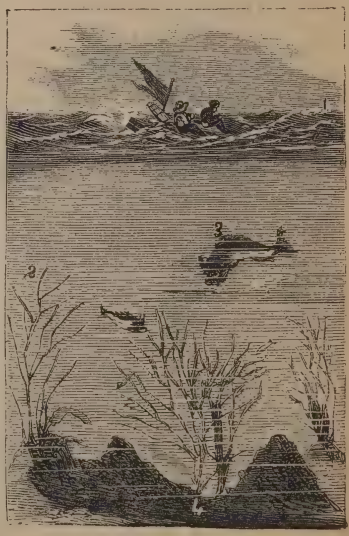
turbances from *volcanic eruptions*, 19, occurring underneath its bed, and heaving up islands, which again disappear. [There is in Central America a *water volcano*, which, although 12,600 feet above the level of the sea, emits torrents of *water*, and millions of *stones*, but has never been known to emit *fire*.] *Earthquakes* also affect the sea by *altering its bed*, or by *swallowing up vast areas of land*, upon which the *sea rushes in*. They also alter the *channels of rivers*, and in this way affect the sea.

Icebergs, 20, create considerable oceanic disturbances in seas that approach the *frigid zones*. In the *arctic* and *antartic* latitudes, the cold is so intense that the crests of waves freeze as they rise, and ice accumulates until it forms mountains, equal in weight to thousands of millions of tons. These are driven by the winds

110.

and tides against each other with terrible violence, and sometimes entering warmer latitudes, ships are overtaken by them and crushed to pieces.

Although the *friction of the wind* upon the surface of the *ocean* raises it into *waves*, 1, the *depths of the sea are calm*, 2, and



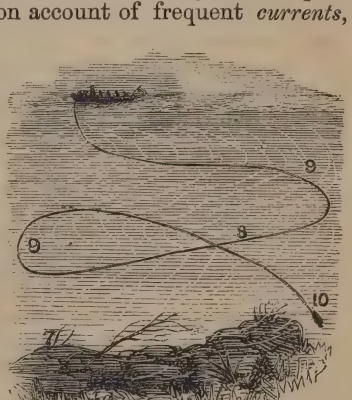
111.

fishes swim, 3, and groves of *marine plants*, 4, flourish unaffected

by the war of elements. Near the *shore*, however, the waters being shallow, the waves fall upon resisting *banks* and *rocks*, then they are broken, and lashed into *foam*, and *fishes* and water plants, *algæ*, becoming involved in the stormy margin of the *coast*, are cast upon the *shore*. *Waves* are said to "roll mountains high," but those of the greatest magnitude rarely exceed thirty feet from the *hollow* of the depressed wave to the *crest* of the elevated one. The water forming waves does not advance, but the *motion* is imparted to *succeeding bodies of water*. Only a little of the *spray*, or the rippled water impelled by the wind, moves *forward*. But the ocean is in *perpetual movement*. Not only do changes of temperature, and the flow of rivers, affect its condition, but, from millions of miles away, in the far depths of space, the heavenly bodies attract it, and form one *great primary wave*, which is for ever moving.*

The *depth of the ocean* is liable to immense variations, and in some instances has never been ascertained. The measurement of the depths of the sea is called *taking soundings;* a *heavy lead*, 5, attached to a *strong thin line*, 6, is sunk in the water until it touches the bottom. Soundings taken in the *Atlantic Ocean* have shown a depth of 18,000 *feet*, or about *three miles and a-half;* soundings in the *Southern Atlantic*, to the west of the Cape of Good Hope, showed a depth of 27,000 *feet*, or *more than five miles*, and then the bottom was not found. At a point 300 miles from the *Bermudas*, 5700 *fathoms* of line were paid out (*nearly six and a-half miles*) and no bottom found. Near the same parallel, bottom was found at *less than half* the above depth. Midway between the *Islands of Tristan d'Acunha* and the mouth of the *Rio de la Plata*, the bottom was reached at a depth of 7706 *fathoms*, equal to 46,236 (more than 46,000) *feet*, or *eight miles and three-quarters*. The time occupied by running out the line was nearly *three hours*. The average depth of the sea on the coast of *England* is estimated at about 120 *feet;* on the coast of *Scotland*, 360 *feet;* on the western coast of *Ireland*, 2000 *feet*. Soundings with the lead cannot be fully relied upon, on account of frequent *currents*,

112.



113.

sometimes running in *opposite directions*, 9, 9, at *different depths*,

* See the "Walk by the Sea Shore."

8, 9, 10, and which, instead of allowing the *lead*, 10, to reach the *bottom*, 7, bear it away. The great density of deep waters also prevents the lead sinking. When the *line*, 9 9, is first thrown out, the *lead*, 10, sinks rapidly; but upon reaching great depths it will scarcely sink further, on account of the *great pressure of the water*. Adhesive matter is frequently attached to the lead, which, taking hold of some fragments of the bottom, indicates its nature. The results of such measurements of depths, and indications of the nature of the bottom, are *soundings*, which are carefully entered in the ship's *log-books*. If the sea were to be dried up, there would appear vast regions of sandy deserts, boundless ocean prairies, lofty mountains, deep valleys, open plains, narrow ravines, mountains with broad table-lands, high cliffs with dark caverns, immense abysses, and all the varying features of the earth's surface, marked in bolder and more romantic characters by the powerful action of water since the world's formation.

The ocean is tenanted with *living creatures*, presenting a wonderful variety of forms, most of them useful to man, and many of the various species abounding in countless myriads. The *Greenland whale* (*Balæna mysticetus*) 11, is the giant of the arctic seas. There great numbers of them congregate, and frolic in the waters; some darting along the surface, others diving, and then leaping into the air, others sporting, and lashing the water into foam with their powerful tails; all of them discharging *volumes*

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of water through their *blowers*, 12, from which they filter the minute shrimp-like *Crustacea*, and jelly-like *Medusæ*, upon which they feed. Creatures of amphibious habits live upon the shores of the polar seas, or tenant the vast worlds of ice which there exist, 13. Among these, the most re-

115.

markable is the *walrus** (*Trichecus Rosmarus*), 14, familiarly called the "sea-horse," "sea-

* The walrus is not an amphibious animal. Strictly speaking, no animals are *amphibious* but such as possess both *lungs* and *gills*. Yet many animals, such as walruses, seals, otters, beavers, etc., have amphibious *habits*, though they are not amphibious.

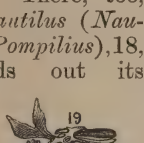
cow," etc. The *walrus* feeds upon marine plants, and the small animals that inhabit them; its long *tusks* are for the purpose of rooting up the plants that form its food; it also uses these tusks to defend itself when attacked. Large herds of these animals gather upon the ice, and at other times quit the water, and venture some distance upon the land. In the *Mediterranean* and *Indian* seas, the *dolphin* (*Delphinus*

16

15 116.

delphis), 15, and in the same waters, as well as on the American and European coasts, the *porpoise* (*Phocœna vulgaris*), 16, pursue their gambols and chase their prey.* In *tropical seas*, the curious family of *Chætodons*, 17, display their singular forms and brilliant colours. There, too, the *nautilus* (*Nautilus Pompilius*), 18, spreads out its membranous *tentacles*, 19, and glides like a fairy ship upon the golden sea; and the *flying fish* (*Exocetus volitans*), 20, darting from the pursuing *dolphin*, springs into the air, and after a brief flight drops into its native element.

117.



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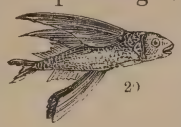

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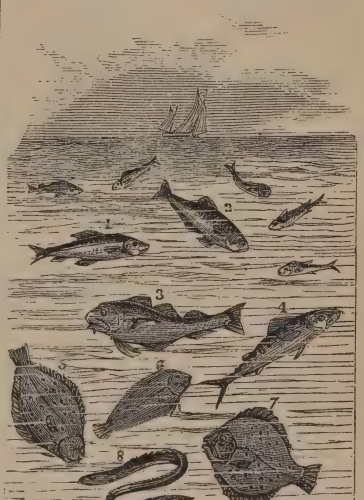
In the seas which surround the British islands, fishes of many varieties abound, among them the *herring* (*Clupea Harengus*), 1; the *bream* (*Abra-*



120.

mis brama), 2; the *cod* (*Gadus callarus*), 3; the *mackarel* (*Scomber scomber*), 4; the *plaice* (*Pleuronectes platessa*), 5; the *sole* (*Pleuronectes solea*), 6; the *turbot*, (*Pleuronectes maximus*), 7; the *conger eel* (*Anguilla conger*), 8; and numerous others.

Besides these, there are many *Crustaceans:* the *shrimp* (*Crangon vulgaris*), 9; the *prawn* (*Palœmon serratus*), 10; the *lobster* (*Homa-*

* *Whales, porpoises*, and the *dolphin* mentioned, are not *fishes*, although they inhabit the sea. See the classification of *fishes* (*pisces*), and also the order *Cetacea*.

rus vulgaris), 11; the *crab* (*Cancer pagurus*), 12; and many more.

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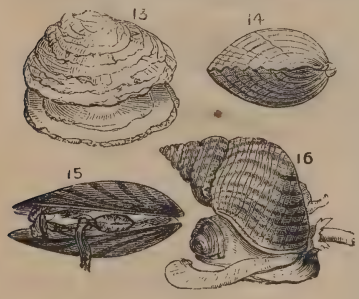
There are also numerous *Molluscs*, such as the *oyster* (*Ostrea edulis*), 13; the *scallop* (*Pecten Jacobæus*), 14; the *mussel* (*Mytilus edulis*), 15; the *whelk* (*Buccinum*



122

undatum), 16. These are but a few of the living forms that people the mighty deep, which teems with life. The waves and ripples of the sea at times become *luminous* with the *phosphorescent light* of myriads of *Medusa*, and the boatman's oar seems, in the

17

123.

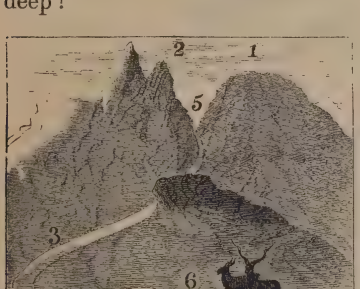
darkness of night, to dip into molten silver, 17.

The ocean fields and plains, like those of the earth, abound with *plants* of various kinds. Some of them grow to an extraordinary size, while others are beautiful in their minuteness. The *red-leaved delessaria* (*Delessaria sanguinea*), 18, displays its beautiful

124.

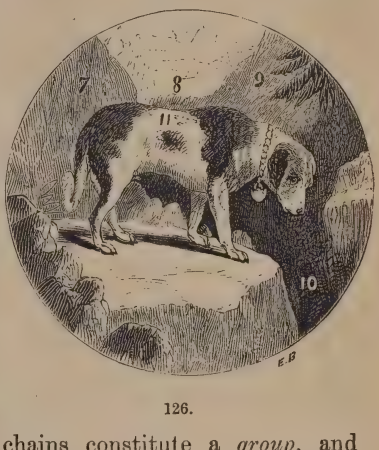
crimson *fronds*, 19, which are as thin as the most delicate silk; and the *feathery shrub* (*Ptilota plumosa*) 20, displays its smaller leaves, arranged with perfect order upon its slender stem. These are the food of marine animals, as the vegetables of the earth are of terrestrial creatures. Shoals of fishes make periodical migrations to places where their particular kinds of food abound. Countless multitudes of *cod* visit the submarine mountains, on the coasts of Newfoundland, to feed upon the crustaceous and molluscous animals that there abound among the watery pastures; and

millions of *herrings*, *mackarel*, and *pilchards*, leaving the deep waters of the sea, approach the coasts, not merely for the purpose of spawning, but to feed upon the ocean herbage of particular localities and seasons, and the numerous animals that have their habitations therein. While Columbus was exploring the seas of the western hemisphere, in the hope of discovering a new continent, he encountered such enormous masses of marine vegetation, that his crew became faint-hearted. and were about to mutiny against him; they believed that the ship had arrived at the limits of the navigable waters, and feared that if they became entangled in the ocean forests, they would never be able to extricate themselves! How true that "they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, see the works of the Lord, and the wonders of his deep!"



125.

The LAND, in its various forms, consists of *mountains*, 1, 2, sometimes crowned by a *summit*, 1, or by a *peak*, 2. The *rugged rocks*, which render the ascent of mountains dangerous, are *crags*, 6. The way *across a mountain*, when difficult and narrow, is a *pass*, 3; and when it lies *between two mountains*, and is deep and difficult, it is a *defile*, or a *gorge*, 5. The *lower part of a mountain*, which approaches the level of the surrounding country, is its *base*, 4. A *number of mountains* succeeding each other, constitute a *range* or *chain*, 7, 8, 9. Several



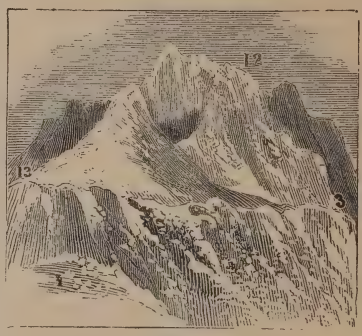
126.

chains constitute a *group*, and several *groups* form a *mountain system*. An *opening in a mountain*, apparently caused by a disrupture, and too narrow and rugged to become a *pass* or *footway*, is a *chasm*, 10. The monks of St. Bernard, keep a noble breed of *Alpine spaniels*, 11, which they employ to find travellers who may have fallen into the *chasms* of the mountain, or have *lost their way*, or become benumbed by the *snow-storm*. These dogs carry little

baskets of provisions for the relief of sufferers.

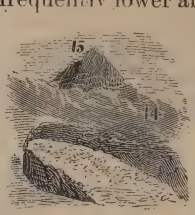
The highest mountain in *Europe* is *Mont Blanc*, one of the Alpine system, the summit of which is 15,730 (nearly 16,000) *feet* above the level of the sea; the highest in the *British Islands* is *Ben-Macahui*, in Aberdeenshire, which rises 4,418 (nearly 4,500) feet; the highest in *Asia*, and in the *world*, is *Dhawala-giri*, one of the Himalayan chain, 28,800 (nearly 29,000) feet; in *Africa*, the *Kilmandjaro*, 20,000 feet; in *North America*, the *St. Elias*, volcanic, 17,860 (nearly 18,000) feet; in *South America*, the *Aconcangua*, volcanic, one of the great Andes system, 23,907 (nearly 24,000) feet; in *Oceanica*, the *Mona Koak*, 16,000 feet. The elevation of the highest mountain (28,800 feet) is, therefore, less than the greatest ascertained *depth of the sea* (46,236), by 17,436 feet, or *more than three miles and a-quarter*. Across the deep *defiles*, 5, and *chasms*, 10, of mountains, *natural bridges*, 11, are sometimes formed, as on the *Icononzo*, among the Andes. At the mountain elevation of 16,000 feet at the *equator*, and at lesser heights in *parallels of latitude* towards the *Northern and Southern Oceans*, snow lies *perpetually* upon the *mountains*, 12.

127.



128.

The height at which snow permanently lies, is the *snow line of the latitude*, 13, 13. *Clouds*, 14, frequently lower about *mountains*, 15, which, with the trees growing upon them, attract vapours floating in the air; and hence, in mountainous districts, in rainy latitudes, there is considerable *humidity*, and *mists* and *drizzling rains* are frequent. Heights



129.

130.

which do not reach the altitudes of the smaller mountains (from

400 to 500 feet), comprise *hills*, 16, 16. When one district of country stands considerably higher than another in the same locality, they form *uplands*, or *highlands*, 17, and *lowlands*, 18. Mountains, instead of rising on one side, and descending over the other, frequently form the lofty borders to elevated tracts of country. Such tracts are called *plateaux*, or *table-lands*, 19. The

19

131.

most extensive table-land of *Europe* is that of central *Spain*, the elevation of which is 2,000 feet above the sea. Upon this are situated the two important provinces of Old and New Castile, the former including Madrid, the capital of the kingdom, with a population of 206,000 (more than 200,000). The table-lands of Persia range from 3,000 to 6,000 *feet* above the sea; of Mongolia, in Central Asia, from 8,000 to 12,000 *feet*. Here, at an elevation, nearly equal to the summit of *Mont Blanc*, a vast plateaux extends, in which there are numerous *lakes* and *rivers*. Grass grows to a prodigious length, and the Thibetans rear immense numbers of *sheep*, *goats*, and *yak buffaloes*.

A great extent of land, destitute of water, and unfit for animal or vegetable life, is a *desert*, 20. The *Sahara*, or *Great Desert of Africa*, consists of

132.

a vast plain of burning sands. It covers on area nearly three times the size of the whole of France, and exhibits occasionally a sterile rocky hill, and a few green spots, or *oases*, where trees grow in the vicinity of springs. For a distance of 700 miles in one direction, no living creature finds a habitation, and travellers rarely venture. Hot winds raise clouds of burning sands, and those who have encountered them describe the effect as terrible. A great plain in Central Asia, the *Gobi*, is covered in parts with stunted grass, in others with shifting sands; but there are occasionally fine pastures. The *Great Indian Desert* extends

over an area nearly double the size of Great Britain; but the whole of this is not absolutely desolate. There are several other deserts, but the Great Sahara is the most desolate and parched waste upon the globe. A material tract of land, without any great elevations or depressions upon its surface, constitutes a *plain*. Plains differ in accordance with their *geographical* situations, and other essentials. *Steppes* are *plains*, or *level wastes*, destitute of trees, in some places covered with *long rank grass*, in others, *sandy* and *barren*, 1. There are extensive steppes in the south-western part of Siberia. *Steppes* are intermediate in character between *deserts* and *prairies*. The latter are

1

133.

134.

verdant plains, which form one of the distinguishing features of *North American* scenery, 2. They are of vast extent, and though destitute of trees, except in particular regions and in the localities of rivers, they are covered with luxuriant grass, wild flowers, and are inhabited by wild animals. Here the American Indian finds herds of *bison* (*Bos Americanus*), 2. In *South America* the *lanos*, or *savannahs*, are great plains, similar to the prairies of *North America*, 2 *a*; but

135.

during the dry season their vegetation is entirely destroyed, and the ground opens in crevices.

Humboldt thus describes the appearance of these withered *savannahs*, or, as he terms them, South American *steppes*:—"When under the vertical rays of the never-clouded sun, the turfy covering falls into dust, the indurated soil cracks asunder, as if from the shock of an earthquake. If at such times two opposing currents of air, whose conflict produces a rotatory motion, come in contact with the soil, the plain assumes a strange and singular aspect. Like conical clouds, the points of which descend to the earth, the sand rises through the rarefied air, in the electrically charged centre of the whirling current, resembling the loud water-spout dreaded by the experienced mariner. The lowering sky sheds a dim, almost coloured light, on the desolate plain. The horizon draws suddenly nearer, the steppe seems to contract, and with it the heart of the wanderer. The hot dusty particles which fill the air increase the suffocating heat, and the wind, blowing over the long-heated soil, brings with it no refreshment, but rather a still more burning glow. The pools gradually disappear, and under the influence of the parching drought, the crocodile and the boa become motionless, and fall asleep, deeply buried in the dried mud."

After the rainy season a vigorous vegetation rapidly springs up again. *Pampas* are other plains of South America, upon which coarse grass, wild oats, canes, reeds, and thistles grow in rank abundance. *Silvas* are *wooded plains*, 3, consisting of

136.

vast forests, with dense underwood, the whole matted together with creeping plants. Such are the great woods of South America, occupying the low-lands, through which the Amazon River flows. *Deltas* are plains rendered

137.

fertile by the waters of rivers, as the *Nile*, *Niger*, and *Mississippi*, 4.* The *Tundra* is a succession

* They are so called, because the waters receding from the land generally fall off on three sides, leaving the land in a triangular form, which, being the form of the letter Δ of the Greek alphabet, takes the name of *delta*.

of *desert tracts*, 5, which lie upon the *Plain of Siberia*, towards the

138.

Polar Sea. In summer these tracts are covered with moss, and interspersed with numerous *lakes* and *marshes;* in winter they are buried under a solid covering of ice. When the ice and snow disappear, coarse grass and rushes spring up, and stunted willows thrive during the brief Siberian summer. *Karroos* are plains in the interior of Southern Africa, remarkable as being the haunts of innumerable *wild beasts*, 6.

139.

Here we find the elephant, rhinoceros, giraffe, crocodile, etc. etc.

Of *karroos* Pringle has given a poetical description: —

"Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent bush-boy alone by my side,
Away, away, from the dwellings of men,
By the *antelope's* haunt, and the *buffalo's* glen;
By valleys remote, where the *owrebi* plays,
Where the *gnoo*, the *tassaybe*, and *hartebeest* graze,
And the *eland* and *gemsbok* unnurtured recline
By skirts of gray forests o'erhung with wild vine;
Where the *elephant* browses at peace in his wood,
And the *river-horse* gambols unscared in the flood,
And the mighty *rhinoceros* wallows at will
In the pool where the wild ass is drinking his fill.
O'er the brown *karroo*, where the bleating cry
Of the *springbok's* fawn sounds plaintively;
Where the *zebra* wantonly tosses his mane,
And he scours with his troop o'er the desolate plain;
And the stately *koodoo* exultingly bounds,
Undisturbed by the bay of the hunter's hounds."

The *Tarai* is a plain wooded country in India, bounded by a swampy tract; also the abode of numberless wild animals. *Jungles* are also woods characteristic of *India*, 7, and infested by the wild

140.

beasts native to its soil. The *Great Plain of Europe* extends from the German Sea through Prussia, Poland, and Russia, towards the Ural Mountains, presenting tracts of heath, sand, and open pasture. From London to Moscow the land is generally level, and has been regarded by geographers as *one vast plain*.

Land forming a hollow between hills, or surrounded by elevated lands, is a *valley* or *dale*, 8; fields in low situations are *meadows*, 9,

141.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters."

and as they give food to flocks and herds, are called also *pastures*, 10.

A sudden *rising* of the land, on the margin of the sea, forms

142.

a *cliff*, 11. A sudden *descent* of land, in an inland situation com-

prises a *precipice*, 12. Elevated lands, almost barren, are *downs*,

143.

13. The *Northern Hemisphere* (from the *Equator* to the *Arctic Ocean*) contains *three times* as much land as the *Southern Hemisphere* (from the *Equator* to the *Antarctic Ocean*); and the surface area of *islands*, in proportion to that of *continents*, is only a *twenty-third part*.

The *land*, like the *sea*, is liable to various disturbing *phenomena*. The most awfully-grand of these arise from *eruptions*, 14, and *earthquakes*, which are connected with volcanic action in the depths of the earth. Volcanoes are believed to be produced by inflammable matters, which ignite by their mutual action, or by the access of water and air, or by the great pressure of the earth. Sometimes an extent of country amounting to five or six hundred miles is involved in these fiery discharges. There are certain regions where volcanoes and earthquakes commonly prevail. These are generally in or near the ranges of great mountains. Among the *Andes* there is an uninterrupted chain of volcanoes. In some districts these disturbances are constant; in some parts frequent; and in others they recur at long intervals. Volcanoes are distinguished from other mountains by their shape, being more conical than those that are non-volcanic. Upon their summits there are hollow cup-like depressions, called *craters*, 15, which form

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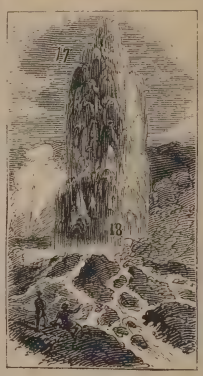
the vents of the fiery matter, and cast forth volumes of smoke, flame, and large pieces of a metallic substance called *lava*, 16. During an eruption the earth appears to be enveloped in flames for miles around, while the upper air is darkened with dense clouds of smoke and ashes. Sometimes the matter thrown out of the *crater* is projected into the air, and borne a great

distance by the wind. In 1845 an eruption occurred in *Iceland*, and some of the ashes were, in ten hours afterwards, deposited upon the Scottish islands. Volcanoes are sometimes wonderfully powerful: a block of stone weighing *two hundred tons* was projected to a distance of *nine miles* from the crater from which it was thrown out. The city of Pompeii was swallowed up by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, accompanied by an earthquake, in the Christian year 79. Many of the citizens had assembled to witness public spectacles at a theatre when the eruption commenced, and streams of fire ran down the sides of the mountain and buried the whole city and the country for miles around. Fifteen hundred years passed away before any traces of the lost city were found! Another terrific eruption occurred in Iceland in 1783. It was accompanied by a violent tempest, and the whole island seemed likely to be destroyed. Three *craters*, opened upon Mount Skapta and poured forth a torrent of lava which continued flowing for six weeks, and ran sixty miles into the sea, forming a rugged bank nearly twelve miles broad; twelve rivers were dried up; twenty-one villages destroyed; and thirty-four others injured.

Connected with volcanic action, in mountainous regions, is another remarkable phenomenon, *the geysers*, or *boiling springs* of Iceland, 17. About twenty-five miles from Mount Hecla, lying northward, there is a great number of these hot springs. The eruptions of the *geysers* occur at irregular intervals, and seldom last more than a few minutes at a time. The basin of the largest of these boiling fountains, called the *Great Geyser*, has the appearance, when quiescent, of a circular pool of water. Prior to the upheaving of the waters a dull rumbling noise is heard; then the pond becomes troubled, and soon jets of water and steam are projected, with great force and noise, to a height of a hundred feet, frequently accompanied with large masses of stone. The earth is slightly shaken, and sounds proceed from beneath the surface like the firing of cannon. The eruption terminates by the emission of jets of steam, and by a violent gurgling of the waters in the crater, 18. These discharges sometimes occur three or four times in twenty-four hours. The hottest springs in Great Britain are those of Bath, which have a temperature of 160°; those at Clifton, 74°; Buxton, 82°; Matlock, 69°; the Carlsbad springs reach 167°, and those of Coguinas, in Sardinia, 198°. The three volcanoes most known are *Mount Etna*, in Sicily, *Vesucius*, in the Bay of *Naples*, and *Hecla*, in Iceland.



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Earthquakes, 19, arise from undulations, heavings, and splittings in the earth, caused by the expansion of substances under the effects of terrestrial fires. Large masses of rock are sometimes *hurled from mountains*, or *forced to the surface*, 20, from beneath

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the bowels of the earth. One theory explanatory of earthquakes is, that our globe, and all other planetary bodies, were originally in a state of fire, and have since been gradually cooling; that there yet exist within the bowels of the earth the remains of its former incandescent state; that water sometimes finds its way to the heated mass within; and that this generates steam and gases which, in escaping, rupture and disturb the earth. Another theory is, that the earth contains chemical elements; which, under certain circumstances, act upon each other and produce fire; or, under the action of water, explode, melt, and fuse—by the intensity of heat—the parts of the earth around them. The effects of

earthquakes, when they are severe, in populous districts, are very terrible. In cities, churches and buildings of every description are thrown down; thousands of people are crushed to death; *fire seizes upon the ruins*, 20*a*; and, in some instances, whole cities are buried.

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In the year 543, a great earthquake was felt throughout the known world; in 742, more than 500 towns were destroyed in Syria, Palestine, and Asia; and the loss of life was beyond all calculation; in 1137, 15,000 people perished in the ruins caused by an earthquake at Cantania, in Sicily; 40,000 people perished by a similar cause at Naples, in 1456; in 1531, 1500 houses were thrown down at Lisbon, and 30,000 people perished; in 1693, another occurred in Sicily, and destroyed Cantania and its 18,000 inhabitants. Altogether, more than 100,000 lives were lost. In 1731, another occurred in China, when 100,000 people were swallowed up at Pekin; at the great earthquake

in Lisbon, 1755, in about eight minutes, 50,000 inhabitants were swallowed up, and the principal parts of the city buried. In 1743, the town of Guatemala, in Mexico—with all its riches, and 8000 families—was swallowed up, the spot where it was buried being now a complete desert. In England, earthquakes have been felt, in 1089; at Lincoln, 1142; in London, when St. Paul's and the Temple Churches were injured, 1580; in Ireland, 1690; in London, 1750; in Naples, 1857, when many towns and villages were greatly injured.

To the action of extinct *volcanoes*, and earthquakes of ages past, we owe the appearance of many of the remarkable caverns which exist in various parts of the earth. *Fingal's Cave*, 1, in

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Staffa, a Scottish island, is an interesting example. Here the *lava*, which once poured forth in a melting state, assumed the form of *columns*, 2, upon cooling. Other caverns arise from the action of water upon minerals: such are *stalactite caverns*, 3, in which water, impregnated with the carbonate of lime, becomes

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solidified, and assumes the form of *icicles* dropping from the *roof*, 4, or shooting from the *floor*, 5. Those pendent from the roof are *stalactites*, 4; those rising from the ground *stalagamites*, 5. Caverns of this description occur in Derbyshire, in the islands of Paros and Antiparos, America, and other parts of the world.

An American traveller thus describes his walk through one of these interesting places:—"We advanced with ease through the windings of the cavern, which at times was so low as to oblige us to stoop, at others so high that the roof was lost in the gloom. But everywhere the most wonderful varieties of stalactites and crystals met our admiring view. At one time we saw the guides lighting up some distant gallery, far above our heads, which had all the appearance of verandahs adorned with Gothic tracery; at another, we came into what seemed the long-drawn aisles of a Gothic cathedral, brilliantly illuminated. The whimsical variety of forms surpasses all powers of description. Here was a butcher's shop, which seemed to be hung with joints of meat; and there a throne, with a magnificent canopy. There was the appearance of a statue, with a bearded head, so perfect, that you could have thought it the work of a sculptor; and further on, toward the end of our walk, the figure of a warrior, with a helmet and coat of mail, and his arms crossed, of the illusion of which, with all my efforts, I could not possibly divest my mind. Two stalactites, descending close to each other, are called, in a German inscription

over them, with sentimentality truly Germ an, 'The union of two hearts.' The resemblance is certainly very striking. After passing 'the hearts,' we came to the 'ball-room.' It is customary for the inhabitants of Adelsberg, and the surrounding country, to come on Whit-Monday to this grotto, which is brilliantly illuminated, and the part called the ball-room is actually employed for that purpose by the peasantry. A gallery, very appositely formed by nature, serves the musicians for an orchestra, and wooden chandeliers are suspended from the vaulted roof. It is impossible for me to describe minutely all the wonderful varieties; the 'Fountains' seeming, as they fall, to be frozen into stone; the 'Graves,' with weeping willows waving over them; the 'Picture,' the 'Cannon' the 'Confessional,' the 'Pulpit,' the 'Sausage-maker's shop,' and the 'Prisons.' I must not omit mentioning one part which, though less grand than many others, is extremely curious. The stalactites have here formed themselves like folds of linen, and are so thin as to be transparent. Some are like shirt-ruffles, having a hem, and looking as if they were embroidered; and there is one, called the 'Curtain,' which hangs exactly in natural folds, like a white and pendant sheet. Everywhere you have the dripping as of a continual shower, showing that the mighty work is still going on, though the several stages of its progress are imperceptible. Our attention was so excited, that we had walked two hours without feeling the least fatigue, or being sensible of the passage of time. We had gone beyond the point where most travellers had stopped, and had been rewarded for it by seeing stalactites of undiminished whiteness, and crystals glittering, as the light shone upon them, like unnumbered diamonds."

Caverns upon sea-shores are chiefly produced by the action of winds and waves upon rocks of varying hardness. The effect of water upon internal and unseen parts is frequently exhibited by

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rocks, which stand boldly out, and encounter the action of the elements. Sometimes dense masses of stone are worn through, and *arched rocks*, 6, produced.

The condition of the surface of the land is liable, with the change of seasons, to considerable variations. Great *falls of snow* lay whole countries under a deep mantle of congealed rain. *Avalanches*, 7, produce disastrous re-

151.

An inhabitant of Savoy, having acquired a sum of money in France, was returning home with his family; and, while crossing a defile of Mount St. Bernard, an avalanche descended from the mountain, and buried him. His wife, seized with terror, remained for some minutes motionless, when she saw her eldest child fall dead with the cold. The despairing mother perceived an alarm-bell, and, taking her little son in her arms, fell on her knees and pulled the rope, which, having rotted with exposure to the weather, broke with the first sound.

sults in countries where immense quantities of snow suddenly descend from the mountains into the plains. The countries where they are most frequent are the *Tyrol*, *Switzerland*, *Piedmont*, and *Savoy*. Avalanches are distinguished by the name of *drift* when the wind raises the light flakes of snow, and bears it, loose and powdery, to some distant spot. *Rolling avalanches* are those which are formed by detached masses of snow assuming a round form in their descent

from the mountains, and by pressure gaining size and weight as they proceed. *Sliding avalanches* are those in which, from the warmth of the earth, masses of snow are detached at the earth's surface, and glide downwards, starting other masses in their course. *Glacier avalanches* are those in which the snow, after partial melting, becomes frozen into solid blocks possessing great hardness and density. Sometimes entire villages, together with their inhabitants, are destroyed by these avalanches. Upon the commencement of an avalanche a low, rumbling sound is heard, and the inhabitants who hear the warning endeavour to escape. The noise increases, until it becomes as loud as thunder, then, overwhelming everything that opposes them, the vast masses descend, and spread death and desolation. *Stationary glaciers* are great accumulations of ice, occupying the levels and slight declivities of mountains. Those of Tyrol, Switzerland, Piedmont, and Savoy occupy altogether a superficial extent of 1484 (nearly 1500) miles. Even more terrible than these *avalanches* and glaciers are the *landslips*, to which the same countries are liable. The snow melting by day, runs into the crevices of the *mountains*, 8, and there *freezing*, splits off by its expansion enormous masses of stone. The cracking of the rocks sounds like the firing of artillery. These *land-slips* frequently occur by night, and so rapidly as to leave no hope of escape, should they fall in the direction of an inhabited spot, 9.

152.

Such are the most remarkable of the phenomena to which the land is liable. Happily for man, there are places where he may dwell free from the alarms of these terrible visitations—where, when his days of toil are over, he may sit down in peace, and contemplate the wonders of the world in which God has given him a dwelling!

The various aspects of *the land in connection with the sea* give rise to interesting definitions of *coast geography*. A broad recess in the shore, with expanse of sea before it, is a *bay*, 10. But the term *bay* is sometimes applied to a great arm of the sea, as the *Bay of Biscay* and the *Bay of Bengal*. *Baffin's Bay* and *Hudson's Bay*, both on the eastern coasts of North America, are larger divisions of the ocean than is commonly understood by the term *bay;* they are, properly, large *inland seas*.—A moderate distance from the shore, where a ship en-

joys clear sea, with no interruptions of land, is the *offing*, 11. A

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small *inlet*, capable of being sometimes used as a place of shelter, but generally dangerous in tempestuous weather, when the wind blows towards the shore, is a *cove*, 12. The *Cove of Cork*, which changed its name to *Queenstown* upon the visit of Queen Victoria, is the finest on the British coasts.

bay-like form. The *Gulf of Mexico* is one of the largest. From

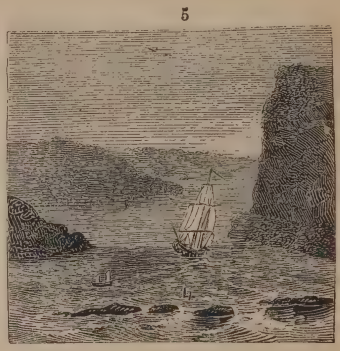
this great gulf issues that powerful ocean current the *gulf stream*, one of the divisions of which finds its way to the frozen North, and there undermines large fields of ice, which afterwards, moving towards warmer latitudes, constitute the icebergs met with in the Atlantic ocean. *Seas*, 155, are large

155.

A *bight* is a small bay forming a bend between two points of land. A *gulf*, 12*a*, occupies a greater recess in the land than a *bay*, 10. A *gulf* and a *bay* differ only in *extent;* we apply *bay* to a large or small recess of the sea, but *gulf* only to a *larger* extent of water, intersecting the land in a areas of water nearly enclosed by land, as the *Mediterranean Sea*, the *Black Sea*, and the *Baltic Sea*, and generally contain within them all the distinguishing characteristics of the greater ocean and its coast lines. Thus, there are in the Mediterranean Sea *islands, bays, gulfs, straits*, etc. *Roads*, 13, are

places not far from the shore, where, from deep water, and the land intercepting winds from the stormy points, ships may ride securely. They are sometimes called *roadsteads*. *Estuaries*, or *friths*, 14, are arms of the sea, which meet the mouths of *rivers* or *lakes;* where the *streams* of river waters meet the *tides* of the ocean. *Creeks*, 15, are *small inlets*, generally running into the land from *bays* or *coves*. A *channel*, 16, is a straight or narrow sea between two *continents*, or between a *continent* and an *island*. The *chops of a channel* are the direct line from the sea, through the channel; thus sailors say, the wind "blew right into *the chops* of the channel." And hence, when the wind alters, the wind "chopped round." An *island*, 17, is a tract of land completely surrounded by water. A *group of islands*, or a *sea* in which there are *many islands*, forms an *archipelago*. An *isthmus*, 18, is a neck or narrow slip of land, by which two *continents* are connected, or by which a *peninsula* is united to the main-land. A *continent*, 19, is a great extent of land, not disjoined nor interrupted by sea. A *strait* or *sound*, 20, is a narrower passage than a *channel*, between two *continents*, or a *continent* and an *island*, or a narrow entrance from the *outer ocean* to an *inland sea*.

A *cape*, 1-155, is the head, point, or ending of a continent, or of any other land, terminating in a point in the sea. Thus, the Cape of Good Hope is the point of the great continent of *Southern Africa*. A *peninsula*, 2, is a comparatively small portion of land united to a continent by an *isthmus*. The *coast*, 3, is that portion of land which lies near to the shore; the *shore* is land which is *washed by the waves*. A *bar*, 4, is a bank of sand, gravel, or *rock*, forming a shoal at the mouth of a *river*, 5, or harbour, obstructing



156.

the entrance, or rendering it difficult in certain states of the tide. A *haven*, or *harbour*, is *any place* which affords *shelter* to ships and smaller vessels. The waves, which are broken by collision with the shore, are *breakers*, 6, the foam

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of the waters broken *on the shore* is *surf*, 7; the light foam of waves *at sea* is *spray*. A chain or range of *rocks*, lying at or near the sur-

face of the water, or covered at high, and left dry at low, water, is a *reef*, 8; the *extremity of a rock*, running out into the sea, is a *point*, 9.

Large bodies of water, which occupy inland situations, and have no *direct* communication with the ocean, are *lakes*, 10.

158.

The *Caspian* (called also the *Caspian Sea*), which is intermediate between Europe and Asia, is the greatest. It covers an area of 130,000 square miles, and is commonly called a sea; its waters are salt, but less so than those of the ocean. The largest fresh-water lakes are those of North America, where there prevails a complete system of lakes and rivers. Lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie, and Ontario are the chief. The most important lake in South America is Lake Titicaca (*tit-e-ka'-ka*). The largest lake in England is Windermere, in Cumberland, which is ten and a-half miles long, and one mile broad; the largest in Wales is the Lake Bala, or Llywn Tegid, about four miles long and two-thirds of a mile broad. In *Scotland*, lakes or *lochs* are very numerous. The largest in Scotland, and also in Great Britain, is *Loch Lomond*, which is twenty-four miles in length, and seven in its greatest breadth. The largest lake, or *lough*, in Ireland is *Lough Neagh*, being about eighteen miles in length, and eleven or twelve in width. The most picturesque lakes in Great Britain are those of Killarney.

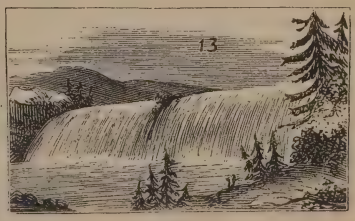
In hilly and mountainous places *springs*, 11, rise, and their

159.

"From a shady nook, by a mossy stone,
Midst ferns and brambles rudely grown,
By day or night unceasing still,
Hear the sound of the mountain rill,
Rippling, dripping, rippling, dripping!"

waters flowing downwards, form small *rills*, *brooks*, *streams*, or *rivulets*, 12.

Augmented by other rivulets, on their way, called *tributaries*, and swollen by occasional rains, the waters form *larger streams*,



160.

12, and produce *waterfalls*, 13, as they descend over slight ele-

vations, and *cascades* when the descent is so considerable as to greatly increase the agitation of the stream. The largest waterfall in *England* is situated upon the river *Tees;* there are several also in *Ireland*, *Scotland*, and *Wales*. Still greater descents than those which distinguish *waterfalls* and *cascades*, produce *cataracts*, 14. The falls of the Niagara, in Canada, form two splendid cataracts, one of which has a descent of 158 feet, the other of 164 feet. The traveller to the Falls hears, at the distance of two or three miles, a deep booming sound, and this becomes louder, until he stands in view of the bewildering cataract.

14

161.

An observer thus describes the effect:—

"So entirely was I unprepared for the enormous volume of water, that, in the weakness of my comprehension and inability to grasp the scene, I was unwilling to turn my aching eyes from the glorious spectacle, apprehending it could only endure for a season, and that the overwhelming rush of water must speedily cease. But as I gazed with trembling anxiety, and marked no change beyond the masses of spray clouds, swayed by the wind across the mighty sheet which ever retained its sublime proportions, the truth began to force itself upon me, that for thousands of years the waters had been falling, by day and night, at all times and seasons, ever sounding, in a voice which, once heard, can never be forgotten, the praise of Him who bade them flow. Here, indeed, may be felt the beauty of the words in our canticle, 'O ye seas and floods, bless ye the Lord, praise him, and magnify him for ever!'—and it was probably with feelings of deep awe that the Indian of olden time, worshipping the Great Spirit, gave the peculiarly appropriate name O-Ni-aw-ga-rah, the Thunder of Waters, to this matchless scene. It is indeed eloquent 'as with the voice of a great multitude—the voice of many waters—the voice of many thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'"

In passing over a long declivity of land, the waters form *rapids* or *torrents*, 15. Three of these obstruct the navigation of

15

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the Canadian river the Great St. Lawrence, and canals have been cut to connect the navigable portions. Waters having found their way to the valleys and low levels of the earth, spread out into fertilizing *rivers*, 16, imparting beauty to scenery, and affording means of communication be-

16

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